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SPREADING THE WAR

THE most obvious thing about this war is that the great Powers do not wish to attack each other. War can take place in Spain, China, Poland and Finland, but no ruler has yet been reckless enough to begin bombing in France, Britain, Germany, Russia or Japan. While this caution prevails the war remains a war of siege. Inevitably the question of "spreading the war" either in the Baltic or the Balkans is canvassed in diplomatic and military circles. Lord Halifax in the course of a speech full of that old-fashioned nobility which characterises him remarked that: "You may rely upon the Government to see that our undertaking to help Finland is not remaining and will not remain an academic and formal sympathy." In a word, the non-intervention game invented by the Fascists in Spain is being played in Finland. How far is the non-intervention to go? There are strong reasons for aiding Finland, which is defending itself with remarkable courage and vigour against aggression. On the other hand, the strategic and political dangers of becoming too deeply involved are equally clear. To get into open war with Russia would offer dangerous hostages to Germany which is in an excellent position to attack communications with the Scandinavian Powers. It would end all hopes of mediation in Finland, finally cement the still questionable Soviet-German alliance and probably play into Hitler's hands. We should draw a distinction between sending weapons and men. For British and French troops to be sent to fight Russians would do more than anything else to stimulate the class conflict within the ranks of the Western Powers. The more reactionary elements in France, Britain and the United States, which were singularly oblivious to aggression against the Spanish workers, would leap to use the instrument of the League against the U.S.S.R., while a large section of the working classes in Britain and France would regard such intervention as a sure proof that the war was after all an imperialist struggle not against Fascism but against Socialism and the working class.

Meanwhile in Soviet Galicia the mystery of the presence of German troops has grown no clearer. The German wireless has now stated that there are 500 officers there, but no troops. It denied that they have any concern with the oil wells or with the railway that runs over Russian territory from Rumania to German Poland. It asked us to believe that their duty is to evacuate the far from numerous German inhabitants of this province. Such a job could not possibly occupy so large a body of officers and would more naturally fall to civilians. British newspaper correspondents in Budapest and Belgrade persist in their reports that the German

" officers " are actually a body of troops amounting to two divisions. Some say that they control a wide corridor through which the railway runs, as well as the oilfields south of Lemberg, which Germany is said to have leased. One version states that the whole military command in Galicia has passed to Germany, while the Civil administration is still Russian. Possession of the railway became essential, because the Russians were diverting to their own use the Rumanian supplies it carried. The *Times* backs a quite different explanation with some circumstantial details. It believes that these troops are on their way to Odessa, whence they will sail to the Caucasus, to stiffen the Russian army destined for a future offensive against Turkey. This is not an unlikely guess. The same thing happened, though in concert with the Turks, during the last war. It is also noteworthy that the German wireless stresses the presence round Damascus of an expeditionary force under General Weygand, which it estimates at the same figure, two divisions. Oddly enough, no one suspects a direct German attack on Rumania. That country is meeting the German demands for oil and foodstuffs at a low rate of exchange.

Towards Peace in India

Independence Day, with its memories of civil disobedience, was celebrated throughout India on Friday. But in spite of the resignation in eight of the eleven provinces of the Congress Governments, the outlook does not point to an early renewal of the mass struggle. The danger may rather be a revival of terrorism by a group of young extremists who find Congress under Mr. Gandhi's leadership disappointingly mild. Numerous arrests show that the police are alive to this peril. Mr. Gandhi has given a generous welcome to Lord Linlithgow's recent declaration, to the effect that only an agreement among Indians was needed to pave the way for the grant of Dominion status immediately after the war. The Mahatma now proposes to put certain questions to the Viceroy in order to clarify this declaration. This step is regarded as a new departure in policy and he has secured the assent of the Working Committee of Congress to a renewal of negotiations. It may be significant that in a recent leading article the *Times* administered a heavy-handed snub to Mr. Jinnah and the Moslem League. It seems to have dawned on someone in Downing Street or Delhi, that reliance on Moslem obstruction has its dangers. The tendency is towards conciliation, but the problem of bridging the communal gulf remains.

Censoring America

British action in censoring the mail carried to neutral countries by American ships and airplanes has aroused not only in the press but at the State Department a fierce resentment which we should be wise to placate. It is explained on our side that a good deal of valuable contraband can be sent out from the States in postal packets, as well as correspondence between spies and their chiefs. It is a question, however, whether we gain by stopping these mischiefs as much as we lose by arousing American wrath. The particular instance that has excited the hottest American comment is the holding up of the " Clipper's " mail for censorship at Bermuda. The result is, of course, to lengthen the already inexcusable delays to which we have drawn attention. The " Clipper " crosses the Atlantic in 28 hours, but letters from New York to London arrive in our experience on the thirteenth or fourteenth day after mailing. A light French plane meets the Clipper at Lisbon, but carries to Paris the French bags only. The British mail spends 48 hours on the overland journey to Paris. It is there censored by the French, a wholly superfluous precaution, which wastes anything up to four days. It then goes overland to London, where it is again subjected to censorship, this time British. The only rational course would be to have a British plane in waiting at Lisbon, and to do the censoring aboard her, as she flies. But the case for a general restoration of the ruined overseas air service is overwhelming. The Indian service, as vital both for political and commercial reasons as the Transatlantic mail, is about to be drastically cut down. If our rulers had any imagination, they would now be creating, with French co-operation, the international Air Corporation that must one day come.

The Czechoslovak Army

An important declaration by Dr. Benes was read in the Czech broadcast on Tuesday night. After denouncing the Nazi destruction of Czechoslovakia, Dr. Benes said that he could state categorically that Britain and France were waging the war in the full recognition that their victory must include the victory of a free Czechoslovakia, and declared that it was the moral duty of every Czechoslovak to fight the Nazi evil. " Revolutionary changes are ahead of us. . . . In the new Europe a Czechoslovakia, democratic and with full national and cultural rights, will play its part." Dr. Benes then announced that a Czechoslovak army was now being formed in France. Service was still voluntary in Britain but compulsion may be introduced later. This statement has important implications. Will service be compulsory not only for Czechs but for Slovaks and all Czechoslovak nationals? Will all citizens of pre-Munich Czechoslovakia be liable? There is no decision on either of these points. There has been a splendid response to the appeal for volunteers and it is dubious whether it would be wise to use compulsion upon refugee Sudeten Germans, or even on refugee Czechs. In the last war the legions were composed of volunteers; and, since the Nazis have announced that they will treat all Czechoslovak prisoners as deserters, it seems impolitic and inhuman to use compulsion in forming the army. This difficulty is accentuated by the present composition of the National Committee, which contains no representation either of the Czech Socialists or of the Sudeten Germans. An enlargement of the Committee and a reversal of the decision to introduce compulsion are urgent necessities.

Sir Dorman-Smith and the Pig Breeders

A fortnight ago the Minister of Agriculture made another of his optimistic forecasts. He stated that the position with regard to feeding-stuffs, though still difficult, would become easier: December was probably the worst month which farmers would have to experience. Optimism on the part of Sir Dorman-Smith is always a bad augury and farmers were not surprised to find last week that conditions had become considerably worse. Now that it is necessary, under the new livestock control, to give twelve days notice before slaughtering pigs, they are wondering if they will be able to keep their animals alive

for the necessary twelve days. Farming is always a gamble, but the uncertainty whether any food will be obtainable for the pigs from day to day is intolerable to farmers. No one knows whether the promised additional supply of feed exists, though it is said that now, five months after the outbreak of war, some is being stored. For two years, in which exceptionally low prices prevailed and the danger of war grew steadily greater, the Government did nothing; now, when cold weather has increased the demand for feeding stuffs, it has chosen to begin storing. The moment scarcely seems opportune. Since it takes six to seven months to feed a bacon hog, the slowing up of pig production must be a long process, and the farmer cannot convert his bacon-factory overnight.

Means Test for Pensioners

Sir John Simon's belated plan for the old age pensioners has not been at all well received. In addition to putting the cost of the greater part of the increases on to the contributors to the fund the Government has rejected any general increase in the amount of the pension and has resorted to an extension of the household means test as applied to those under the U.A.B. Sir John Simon made great play with the idea that many old-age pensioners were in possession of other resources, or were in employment, or might be expected to resume employment under war conditions. It is satisfactory, as far as it goes, that wives over 60 of men pensioners over 65 are in future to receive pensions, that women over 60 are now to be pensionable, and that the cost of supplementing pensions, now borne on local rates through the P.A.C.s, is to be transferred to central funds (though not without an adjustment of the block grant). It is profoundly unsatisfactory that there is to be a new household means test, administered by a new Board at the Ministry of Health analogous to the U.A.B., and above all that the conception of what a fortnight ago we called "the iron ration"—a minimum to be assured to all without special inquisition or discrimination—is rejected out of hand. The household means test is deservedly hated, though it has been considerably humanised since the early days of the U.A.B. The new means test authority under the Ministry of Health seems unnecessary and thoroughly undesirable. If there is to be a test, let the U.A.B. run it; but there ought not be any test, until the Old Age Pension has been raised all round to a tolerable minimum level, and then the test should apply only to supplements above the new level.

Lord Stamp on Prices and Exports

In the House of Lords on Tuesday, Lord Stamp was reassuring about prices, but much less reassuring about the condition of the export trades. The prices of primary products, he pointed out, have risen over the last four months not merely in this country but all over the world, the American index showing an increase of 19½ per cent., as against a rise of 28½ per cent. in Great Britain. For industrial materials, as distinct from foodstuffs, the increases are much larger—31 and 35½ per cent. Lord Stamp argued that in the light of these figures there was no indication of any inflationary rise of prices in Great Britain, the difference between the increases here and in the United States being sufficiently explained by the depreciation of sterling. Profiteering, he suggested, was exceptional, even if it was glaring in particular instances. We ought to be willing to allow price increases to cover changes in inescapable basic costs, but not beyond this point. Lord Stamp then went on to deal with the export situation. The difference between our imports and exports showed a worsening of 41 per cent.—too large a gap to be bridged by using our available foreign exchange, or even by selling securities. Yet he seemed sceptical of proposals for subsidising exports, though he promised to examine them, on the ground that proposals for tax or similar discriminations were to be regarded with suspicion. We must stimulate exports by some means, on a really considerable scale; but Lord Stamp stopped short of telling us how to do it without some form of subsidy.

Economics and War

Our Parliamentary Correspondent writes: Mr. Ronald Cross made a slick and competent speech last week in defence of his Ministry of Economic Warfare. The tale he had to tell—of vigorous action, and of difficulties encountered only to be overcome with lightning rapidity—sounded rather too good to be true. But in this field the facts are not at the disposal of the House of Commons. Mr. Dalton and Mr. Harold Macmillan were therefore obliged to content themselves with expressions of cautious doubt. Only one point was received with blank incredulity, and that was the remarkable assertion that the Treasury had never vetoed a constructive suggestion designed to prevent supplies reaching Germany. If Mr. Cross in fact exercises this hypnotic influence over our real masters he had better pay a flying visit to each of the economic departments in turn.

Admittedly the question of dependants' allowances bristles with difficulties. In an agreeable speech last Thursday, Mr. Oliver Stanley promised to make an exhaustive personal enquiry into every aspect of it, and to report his conclusions to the House. He thus went far to appease the growing body of critics of this branch of Army administration, and to smooth his own path. Mr. Stanley has yet to prove that he possesses the dynamic qualities demanded of the civilian head of a Service Department in time of war. Meanwhile his handling of parliamentary questions is much superior to that of his predecessor.

In the debate on the second reading of the Bill to deal with the distribution of Czech assets, the House once again proved its curious ability to come to grips at short notice with a highly technical subject. There was a general demand for the payment of cash claims in full to British holders, who include Czech residents in this country. This would seem to be justified, because there is plenty of money available to do it.

About 6 o'clock we passed on to a discussion of the black-out. Concern over the toll of the roads is naturally increasing, and Captain Wallace's proposals to deal with the problem seemed to most of us to be quite inadequate. But this is not a subject on which private Members are disposed to press the Government too hard. If the Air Ministry has decided that a black-out is necessary for the security of this country, a black-out there must be.

I detect a growing feeling of apprehension in the lobbies that, despite a considerable façade of confidence and optimism, all is not well with the Government, and particularly with the higher direction. This naturally concentrates at present upon the economic field, where evidence of a lack of co-ordination, efficiency and drive is only too apparent, and accumulates every day. The real parliamentary battle for a Government which is capable of winning this war has scarcely begun. But demands from all sides for a reconstruction of the War Cabinet, and radical changes in the existing administrative machinery, will be made with ever-increasing urgency during the weeks that lie immediately ahead. In the long run they cannot be resisted. We can only hope that they will produce the necessary results before irreparable damage has been done.

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MR. CHURCHILL AND THE NEUTRALS

MR. CHURCHILL'S broadcast appeal was more favourably received by British than by neutral listeners. They cannot doubt that the Western Powers will respect their independence: they know that a victorious Germany would treat it as a fiction. They cannot be indifferent to the outcome of this war. Why then, Mr. Churchill asked, do they wait to be gobbled one by one? The argument is powerful; why did it evoke so dubious a response? First because it came so late. In effect, Mr. Churchill was trying to revive the League's policy of collective security. He spoke for a Government that has sabotaged this idea. After the destruction of Czechoslovakia and Poland, to revive the League idea requires more than a mere appeal from this country. It demands a demonstration of the will and power to protect the smaller neutrals, if they dare to trust the democracies. They require a confidence in the aims and arms of the Allied Powers; no less important, they want an immediate proof that the way of economic co-operation with Britain and France is an immediate alternative to becoming part of Germany's *lebensraum*.

Mr. Churchill wisely refrained from any detailed arguments and addressed his appeal *urbi et orbi*. Unhappily for this style of argument the European neutrals present a picture of infinite variety, and each has his gaze fixed on his own local and peculiar situation. They vary, moreover, as much from our own standpoint as from their own. Belgium, for example, with her numerous and well-equipped army and her formidable fortifications would be a great asset to the Allied cause. Rumania, on the other hand, with her exposed position and her weak army is rather a liability, and it happens that she excites the greed of two great and two small Powers. Yet it was Rumania that Mr. Chamberlain, with an impulsive chivalry that looks like a misprint in the record of his career, chose to guarantee. Similar variations repeat themselves all round the map. Some of these smaller Powers stand to gain on a short-term calculation by espousing the German cause. Hungary would acquire Transylvania at Rumania's expense and Bulgaria would get the Dobrudja. These glittering prizes may well lead the average short-sighted man to forget that in return these countries would become the tied vassals of a victorious Germany, items in her vast empire of *Mitteleuropa*. The Hungarians realise, moreover, that they could receive no direct aid from the West. But if it is on the solidarity of their neighbours that they are to rely, a whole series of internecine feuds have first to be settled. The Balkan States cannot and will not rally to Mr. Churchill's appeal until this tangled diplomatic problem has been solved. That was one of the drawbacks in Mr. Chamberlain's hurried and lavish dispensing of guarantees. The pledge to Rumania should have been made contingent on the grant of full autonomy to her Hungarian minority and the cession of part of the Dobrudja to Bulgaria. The Greeks should have been told that they must grant a port on the Aegean to Bulgaria: on our part we ought on terms to cede them Cyprus. Had we moved on these lines we might have created that solid Balkan block which the Turks are now so belatedly trying to cement.

The Swedes face a problem of a different order. They know what they risk if they remain correctly neutral and fail to bring all their resources to the aid of the Finns. The least that can happen, if Finland is eventually over-run, is that Russia will acquire the Aaland Islands, which command Stockholm. The next move might then be the taking from Norway of her northernmost Atlantic port of Narvik. Sweden would then be encircled, and the harbour through which she exports most of her iron ore would be in hostile Russian hands. If she allowed Norway to be despoiled and Finland to be conquered at her doors, she could survive, if she survived at all, only on suffrance. Like the Baltic States, she seemed fairly secure, so long as Germany and Russia were at feud: but if they have agreed on their respective spheres of influence, is she more than an animated supper awaiting their digestion? Her politicians have decided, under the pressure of the wealthier strata in her population, to take their chance. In some tentative form a British guarantee has probably been suggested to her. But it could operate only if Norway joined her. She would then have to ask herself whether the British Navy could undertake to transport and supply a substantial expeditionary force across the mined waters of the North Sea. Or could it do what it failed to do in the narrow waters of the Turkish Straits—could it force the Baltic? If not, Germany's fleet would control its waters without dispute, and with her vast superiority in man-power, the end would be only too easily predictable. Between them, Russia and Germany can crush Sweden. Sweden may have either to submit to German-Russian dictation or to become the next battle-ground of the second world-war. Who can blame her if she seeks to evade this unenviable choice by a precarious neutrality sympathetic to the Finnish cause?

It is easy to draw the conclusion that Mr. Churchill spoke too late. Such pessimism is too simple. Though we cannot expect the smaller neutrals to surrender their neutrality until invasion is imminent, there are in our modern international anarchy a whole scale of neutralities ranging from out and out assistance to the aggressor to discreet assistance to the forces of civilisation. Neutrality in the sense of impartiality no longer exists. So far the Nazis, partly by excellent publicity, partly by commercial efficiency and partly by blackmail, have cajoled their neighbours into a neutrality well on their side of the scale. It is the task of British statesmanship to redress the balance. This will not be done by a painstaking effort to avoid hurting all susceptibilities. To be troublesome to no one is also to be helpful to no one; and the very bluffness of Mr. Churchill's tone, if its immediate result was an unfavourable response in a neutral press forced for years to sing the Nazi tune, had its advantages. It reminded the world that Britain does not consist of Chamberlains and Simons, that there are in this country men prepared to say the wholesome truth even if it is unpalatable.

But more than words are needed. If the neutrals are to be convinced of the wisdom of listening to Mr. Churchill's advice, Britain must take the offensive against the Nazi trade-attack. The neutrals prefer trading with the democracies: they will not do so, unless we can offer them the services of an efficient business. They prefer the ideals of democracy: they will not listen to them unless the Ministry of Information can defeat Dr. Goebbels. They prefer co-operation to submission to totalitarian co-operation. They cannot co-operate unless France and

Britain show that co-operation between nations produces positive economic results. Once again, may we illustrate the point by repeating our proposal for the development of an international air service? Let France and Britain set up an air corporation and show that European Airways can, even while the war is on, give better service than the Nazis. If that and many other proofs of our constructive capacities were offered, Mr. Churchill's sharp words might have a bracing effect.

FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS ON WAR FINANCE

AT the end of the last war, the cry that successfully drowned all others, on the home front, was the cry for a return to "pre-war conditions." Some concessions had to be made, in the name of "reconstruction," to the demand that the Government should redeem its promises of "homes for heroes" and "a Britain fit to live in." But these concessions were kept within narrow limits, or stalled off till the advent of the post-war deflation had provided fresh arguments against making them; and such of them as were made were fitted carefully into the framework of the old capitalist society that was being restored. In the name of "restoration of pre-war conditions," the various State controls imposed under stress of war needs were taken off as quickly as possible, and business was handed back to its private proprietors, while emergency departments were hurriedly disbanded and everything possible was done to efface the lessons of wartime industrial organisation. British capitalism, indeed, never behaved after 1918 as it had behaved before 1914. It had learnt too many lessons of its own, which it had no wish to unlearn, about the advantages of trustification and monopoly. But it was left to apply these lessons in its own way, without any sort of public control over its operations. Some people were ruined by the last war and others enriched; but the class-structure of British society emerged miraculously intact, with only minor changes in the distribution of wealth among its component elements.

The British governing classes hope most earnestly that they will be able during and after the present war to repeat this triumph of self-preservation. But they see already that the difficulties in the way are a good deal more formidable now than they were the last time. Great Britain, owing to the growth both of the National Debt in the last war and of the social services—the ransom paid after 1918 for the preservation of the capitalist social order—entered the present war with an immensely higher level of taxation, so that it is not easy to increase taxes in the proportion in which they were increased between 1914 and 1918 without causing much more social dislocation. British overseas investments are both smaller in value to-day and liquid to an inferior degree than they were in 1914; and facilities for foreign borrowing are also smaller. Our export trade has fallen off badly, and cannot be easily increased so as to finance the purchases we want to make in foreign countries. Finance, more than anything else, seems likely, in Sir William Beveridge's phrase, to be the "bottle-neck" in this war, whereas last time shipping space was a much more formidable problem. But, if finance is the "bottle-neck," two consequences follow. It becomes indispensable to increase exports to the utmost possible extent, even with the aid of substantial subsidies; and it also becomes indispensable to reduce home consumption of imported goods or of goods made with imported materials, in order to relieve the pressure on the exchanges.

This need for decreased consumption, however, cannot easily be translated into an actual decrease of the required amount unless the Government either rations practically all imported goods, with a drastic control at every stage, or allows their prices to rise so much that consumption of them has to be heavily reduced. The first of these courses would be very unpopular with the Government's own supporters, and also pretty difficult to apply beyond the range of standard necessaries of life. The second course would be liable to give rise to a general inflationary movement, and would be certain to lead to general demands for increased wages, pensions, benefits, and so on—demands which could hardly be resisted as long as the capitalists were allowed to make high profits and the middle classes let down lightly—as they undoubtedly are—in the matter of direct taxation. Accordingly, the Government has so far followed neither policy in any consistent way, though it has leant much more towards the second, which is the easier and is obviously more to the taste of the capitalist interests now in control of the various branches of the Supply and other Ministries.

If we could feel fairly sure of the war ending within a year or eighteen months, the problem would not be very serious. For in that case, by selling off as many as possible of our foreign investments and by using up stocks, in addition to borrowing where we could, it would be possible to finance imports up to the very limits of the available shipping space, without taking any great pains to expand exports at the expense of home consumption. This would mean that we should emerge from the war the poorer for the loss of a large fraction of our overseas capital, owing substantial sums for goods supplied, and under the need to replenish stocks at the expense of post-war consumption. But, from the standpoint of the governing classes, these would be minor disadvantages; for certainly a short war financed in this way would involve the minimum of dislocation of capitalism and would offer much the best prospect of repeating the "return to pre-war conditions" so successfully brought off after 1918.

On the other hand, if we assume that the war is going to last for three years at least, and very likely longer, we shall be compelled to face the problem of financing it in quite a different way. If we sell all our available overseas investments in the first year, we obviously increase enormously the difficulty of paying for the war in subsequent years. Nor, if we expect the war to go on, can we afford to use up stocks, or to exhaust our credit, where credit is available. We have to budget quite differently for a short and for a long war.

The Government told us, at the outbreak of hostilities, that we must be prepared for the war to last a full three years; and it is presumably on this basis that Sir John Simon believes himself to have laid his plans. He has not, however, so laid them that he can finance a three years' war unless he can prevent wages from rising and at the same time allow prices to rise so as seriously to restrict working-class consumption. It is becoming increasingly plain that these two things form an essential part of his and Mr. Chamberlain's wartime financial policy. But it is also evident that Mr. Bevin and other Trade Union leaders are fully alive to this fact, and have been put by their realisation of it into a mood of angry opposition in which they are likely to stand out firmly for all the wage-increases they can get—at any rate unless Sir John Simon radically changes his policy and sets to work seriously to tax the Government's middle-class supporters, which he is naturally very reluctant to do.

This question, about the probable duration of the war, lies in the background of the entire discussion about the proper methods of war finance. For example, the reception given to Mr. Keynes's proposals for a general savings *plus* taxation levy was largely governed by a reluctance to face the actual application of unpleasing imposts which are unavoidable only if the war lasts, say, for more than another year. If the public believed that the war was likely to last three years, it would be much readier to face up to the acceptance of drastic methods. As it does not really believe this, it lives in the hope of being let down as lightly as possible this year, and of peace coming in time to make it unnecessary to alter its habits and standards of living to more than a minor extent.

But it can be taken as certain that not only a large part of the public, but also most members of the Government and most of the Government's influential supporters, are living on these hopes. They can see, plainly enough, that a long war is

practically bound, in all the circumstances, to make an end of the capitalist system under which they thrive—at all events in its existing form. It is bound, however it ends, to unloose forces the working of which cannot be foreseen—forces of which those who are thoroughly comfortable with things as they have been have ample cause to be afraid. There is accordingly, on the Government side, a strong temptation, while telling the public to prepare for a long war, actually to budget for a short one.

It should be the business of the Labour Party, not at all to constitute itself the advocate of a long war, but to expose the short-sightedness of present policy, and to stand out for financial measures which will make it possible for a long storm to be endured, if it must be endured, with the minimum of social hardship. The Labour leaders ought therefore to give much more careful attention than they seem yet to have done to Mr. Keynes's proposals, which are designed to tap the large surplus collectively possessed by the middle classes. They ought also to press harder than they have pressed so far for drastic changes in the system of State control of industry, in order to secure a policy of stabilised prices for all the necessaries of life, accompanied by rationing where that is necessary in order to limit consumption. It is indeed only on the basis of the Government's acceptance of this latter policy that the Trade Unions can be expected to agree to a limitation of their claims for wage-changes sufficient to offset the rise in the cost of living. Moreover, on the basis of a policy of stabilised prices, the advantages of the Keynes scheme—or some variant of it—to the main body of the people, would be much more apparent, and much easier to bring home to public opinion.

A LONDON DIARY

I WAS very glad to notice that the Archbishop of York did something to clear up the confusion in the public mind about war aims. He urged that we needed two declarations; the first, "the conditions under which we shall be ready to agree to an armistice and enter into negotiations," and second, "the way in which the permanent peace settlement is to be reached." He was quite right in saying on the second point that it is impossible for any government now to be precise; and he made the sensible suggestion that we should "postpone the meeting of the conference which is to settle permanent terms of peace for a long enough period after the cessation of hostilities to allow the passions of war to have cooled; and if this involves a preliminary conference to settle a temporary truce, so be it." This, I am sure, is the right line of approach; minimum armistice terms should be settled between France and Britain and constantly broadcast to Germany. If Hitler disregards them we shall at least have let the Germans know that peace can be had if their rulers wish it.

* * *

How is the party-truce working outside the Houses of Parliament? In Southampton the I.L.P. are considering running a candidate: Labour must remain silent. In Cambridge University a distinguished scientist who is standing for the Government is opposed by another well-known man of science who will command the more progressive and Opposition vote. A Federal Union candidate has also been announced but I doubt if he will stand. In Southwark two Labour councillors fight each other and the indefatigable Mrs. Van der Elst. A correspondent writes that in his district in at least three cases Conservative majorities have disregarded the convention that, when elections are not fought, seats should be filled by the Party in occupation, and forced thier own choice upon Local Councils. At Congleton the Conservatives saw to it that two of their party replaced two independents and their Leader remarked "Every member of the Council would agree that more industrialists should join the Council so that ratepayers should benefit from their business efficiency." At Burton-on-Trent a Labour seat was filled by an independent with Conservative backing, while at Biddulph the nominee of the Labour Party was turned down and another Labour Party member selected by the other side. No wonder that in many districts the Party is demanding the end of the truce! How strong the discontent is is shown by a report I received from another source on two regional rallies at which members of the Executive were explaining the Party's war-aims to representatives of a large number of constituency parties. In both cases the speaker soon had most of the conference against him. Pacifist and Communist demands for immediate peace came from a very small minority, but nearly everyone felt that the Party leaders had entirely failed to make their opposition to Mr. Chamberlain clear to the country; and in the second of the conferences the suspicion that the war was being "switched" against Russia was not allayed when the speaker in reply to a question said that it was inexpedient to take on Russia: we must deal with Germany first. The Party does excellent work in Parliament, but in the electoral truce the leadership inevitably loses touch with its keenest workers in the country. Since few people read Hansard, they cannot know the details of Parliamentary discussions, and the suspension of meetings which has resulted from the truce, makes them suspicious not only of their own Party but of democracy itself. This is surely a very strong argument against the truce—an argument which is not met by saying that elections are technically difficult in the black-out or that the removals in many industrial areas have already made the new register out of date or biased it heavily against Labour. For the register will get more and more out of date as the war goes on and if this argument holds, the electoral truce will never be broken for the duration.

* * *

One immediately thinks of Senator Borah as the most typical of Americans, which is another way of saying that he did not in fact conform to any common American type, but rather possessed in an uncommon degree certain characteristics which most people regard as peculiarly American. I remember years ago sitting behind him on a public platform, when he poured out in rolling periods an eloquent tribute to Americanism. The philosophy belonged to the age of *laissez-faire;* there was a belief in rugged individualism, the detestation of State interference and that Puritan approach which justified America in watching the sins and quarrels of Europe from a superior moral height. In a word, it was precisely the doctrine of British liberalism in the heyday of the nineteenth century. That it was altogether out-of-date in the days of great trusts, let alone in days of the New Deal made no difference to Senator Borah's prestige. He was an honest and disinterested politician who cared nothing for party but stood for principle. I believe that he had never travelled in Europe until his one recent expedition, but that he took the trouble to inform himself by careful conversation with European visitors. I have heard him criticised for taking up great causes with a moral flourish of trumpets, and then when it came to action, seeming to forget about them. Presumably, the explanation is that, as a good Liberal of the nineteenth century school he was always willing to arouse public opinion and to protest against a public evil, but inclined to jib when it proved that the remedy involved just that paternal action by the State which he regarded as the greatest evil of all.

* * *

Two of the foremost literary men whom Communism has attracted, Malraux and Ralph Bates, fought for the Republic in Spain: one of them has found the outrage on Finland too much for him. Bates has explained in a powerful article in the American *New Republic* why he has left the Communist Party. The Finnish business decided him, but he criticises other recent phases of Stalinism also, including the conduct of the party during the last phases of the Spanish struggle. This cannot have been easy for a man whose whole life for many years has been given to the party. As a working engineer, Bates went out from Slough to Barcelona, learned Spanish and Catalan rapidly, lived as a worker among the workers and tramped all over Spain. *Lean Men,* which is far

from being his best book, reflects something of his own work as an organiser for the party in Barcelona, and also his passion for music. The book that ought to live as one of the most vivid pictures of peasant life in literature, is, however, *The Olive Field*. During the Civil War Bates served alternately, now, as Malraux also did, as a propagandist in the United States and again as a Commissar in the Lincoln Battalion. What, I wonder, is the future of such men? Must their audacity and public spirit be wholly lost to the Socialist movement, while they seek their compensation in literature?

* * *

Often when I have been asked to speak about propaganda, public opinion and the press, I have urged school-teachers and others to make comparison of newspaper reports a regular part of the upper-school curriculum. The idea has been taken up in some schools where newspapers are studied, partly as a guide to current events, partly as a basis for a lesson in composition and partly as an introduction to the writing of history. If you compare different accounts of the same event in, say the *Times*, the *News Chronicle*, the *Daily Worker* and the *Manchester Guardian*, you have a useful example of the relativity of truth and an excellent basis for the study of human motives and public psychology. At last a book has appeared admirably suited for use in a class on citizenship such as I have described. *Between the Lines or How to Read a Newspaper* by Dennis Thompson (Muller, 3*s*. 6*d*.) discusses such questions as the psychology of advertising, the part played by snobbery, the reasons why we like murders and atrocities, and the difficulties of presenting the truth, not in an academic way but with frequent illustrations from the press in recent years. It lists the questions that we ought to ask ourselves after reading newspaper paragraphs and contains more instruction about the press and "what the public wants" than most of the large, mainly American, textbooks that have been written on the theory and practice of propaganda during the last twenty years. The book is particularly useful for school use; the examples are taken impartially from the Left and the Right, the militaristic and the pacifist. It will appeal to many who are not school-teachers and it has a singular aptness at a time when the art of propaganda is being more fully and scientifically practised than at any other time in the world's history.

* * *

A farmer writes that the coming of rationing brought the war home for the first time to his labourers. For them the bacon-ration is a real shock, as they cannot think that breakfast really is breakfast without bacon. "Those people in Whitehall ought to try carting 'muck' at seven a.m. on a cold stomach before they say four rashers a week is enough," said one labourer. Considering that in many towns, rationing has meant not 4 ounces per head but a sudden surplus, which housewives have been pressed to buy, there does seem to be a real case for an 8 ounce ration for heavy manual labourers. Could its cost in tonnage and foreign exchange outweigh the satisfaction it would give to millions of homes? I doubt it. Nor is it any use arguing that people should get used to porridge or herrings. The working-man, especially the farm-worker, is a food-tory and not even a war can change the habits of a lifetime overnight.

* * *

On Friday, January 19th, the *Daily Express* reported that "a resolution of protest against black-out restrictions on business was telegraphed to Sir John Anderson, Minister for Home Security, by shopkeepers in Islington, North London, yesterday, after a meeting at the Central Library, Holloway Road." A correspondent sends me some further information about this meeting. It was organised by the National Association of Shopkeepers and Small Traders (of whom there are thousands in Islington) and by the *Daily Express*, which gave it daily publicity for a week beforehand. In spite of this ballyhoo the motion of protest was carried by exactly fourteen votes to three. These figures (which do not reach me from the *Daily Express*) are an adequate comment on this remarkable stunt.

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to Paul W. Freeman

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

In simple truth, to large extent the old ideas about a vegetarian diet having a direct influence upon character will have to go—though, with sufficient reason, we may still ask ourselves what sort of spectacle, human or subhuman, Adolf Hitler must have presented had he been a flesh-eater!—*The Vegetarian News.*

As a prominent resident put it, we are acknowledged to be the best batting side in Irak, and at bottom the people favour us more than any other foreign Power. But like all batting sides, we are vulnerable on a sticky wicket. For us Palestine has been, in Irak's estimation, our sticky wicket. The Germans have taken full advantage of our vulnerability and have bowled us out repeatedly in a manner which has tended to affect our prestige in the eyes of the Irak public.—Arthur Merton in the *Daily Telegraph and Morning Post.*

Hore-Belisha may not be War Minister, but Christ is King.—Religious Notice in *Essex Chronicle.*

Will you kindly give your opinion whether doing crossword competitions is displeasing to God?—R. R.

I can well believe that such competitions are most entertaining and instructive, and certainly there is not the slightest reason, from the Christian point of view, why you should not indulge in what is, surely, a perfectly innocent pastime, when no money transactions are involved.—*The Christian Herald.*

For stealing sixpennyworth of coal from the Manchester Colliery's sidings near Brackley Pit, a 66-year-old unemployed labourer, Edward Prosser, of Rothwell Avenue, Little Hulton, Bolton, was sent to prison for one month at Bolton on Thursday. It was stated that he had been to prison on three previous occasions for coal thefts. Prosser, who pleaded guilty, said he had recently left hospital, his wife was ill, and they had no coal.—*The Manchester Guardian.*

Air Marshal Barratt's fine order of the day to his forces may serve to remind your readers of Ezekiel's vision of the four cherubim: "Their wings were joined one to another." . . . "Two wings of every one were joined one to another" (ch. 1, vv. 9, 11).—Letter in the *Times.*

I suppose that in the course of his long, honourable and fruitful service in this country Lord Halifax has committed mistakes. The ideal British statesman must commit mistakes.—*Yorkshire Evening News.*

The Daily Telegraph accuses The Daily Express of imitation. Yet The Daily Telegraph is built on imitation of The Daily Express. —*Evening Standard.*

NOTE ON THE SPIRIT OF OUR TIMES

WE are reaching the end of a century of middle-class government in Britain; for the real triumph of that class came when it used its power to persuade Sir Robert Peel to abolish the corn-laws. Thenceforward, it has been able to fashion the whole state in the image of the needs it has perceived; and the record of subsequent legislation is the index to the virtues and limitations of its perception.

It has been, in many ways, a government of great qualities, active, moderate, tolerant, industrious. But it has rarely been imaginative government, for imagination is not the characteristic quality of the middle class. Because, also, it has not been imaginative, it has also, for the most part, been timid government. For its main concern has been evasion of the need to make great decisions, since these disturb that sense of security, that maintenance of the tried routine, which are the middle-class criteria of successful rule. It thinks of the standards by which it conducts its private affairs as those by which the

public business is to be carried on; even its empire, for instance, is conducted as though it is a great trading company. The power to project its mind beyond itself, which has not seldom been the quality of aristocratic government at its best, the ability to build a spiritual relation between itself and those whose lives it controls, these are characteristics of which a middle-class government is incapable. It thinks, almost wholly, in terms of what Carlyle called the cash-nexus—it distrusts as impractical those who do not think also in those terms. It fails to realise that relations so built can only endure when the security and wealth which are its own aims can be continuously extended to the poorer sections of the community.

Since the last war, generally, and since the great depression, in particular, it has been increasingly clear that the cash-nexus is an inadequate basis upon which to build the peaceful hope of continued power. The contradictions of the regime are too profound. There are too many ambitions and too few places. The old dare not find adequate room for the young. There is not merely a vast and permanent army of unemployed; it has been educated to the point where, resenting its unemployment, it will listen to any voice which calls upon it to serve. There is a great and dangerous increase in political scepticism at a time when the range and intensity of our problems call urgently for the unity of an agreed political faith. The government of the middle class continues, but less because it commands willing assent than because it has not yet been effectively challenged. The conviction of its incapacity is widespread; the sense is profound that it lacks the courage, and perhaps the will, to make an effort proportionate to its problems.

If there is to-day no actual disorder, the conditions which make for the emergence of disorder have entered deeply into men's minds. No generation since Chartism has been so habituated to the notion that the means justifies the end. No generation, either, has been so deeply divided about the ultimate objectives of social organisation. Two wars, and that vast social movement of which the Russian Revolution is merely the chief incident, have thrown all the traditional values into the melting-pot which the middle class organised into a system creating confidence. The gales of fundamental change are in the air. They are the precursor of a possible tempest of which the middle class has inadequate premonition.

For it does not seem to understand what, in a period like our own, it is essential for the rulers of a society to realise: that history has called into question the fundamental character of our social institutions. When the masses are deeply convinced that the present distribution of wealth is unjust; when, organised as a major political party, they declare the present system of ownership to be inequitable; when they point out that no political reforms seem able to rationalise our social conditions; when, perhaps above all, the decay of religious faith prevents them from hoping in the next world for benefits that will compensate for the deficiencies in their present situation; then, it may be suggested, the stage is set for one of those fundamental revolutions in the human spirit of which the Reformation and the Revolution of 1789 are the supreme examples in the modern time.

But here there enters the tragic result of that defective imagination in the middle class which I have noted. It cannot enter into the mind of its critics. It attributes to the emotion of envy what is due to reasoned disbelief. Able to argue, on its own premises, that its balance-sheet does not permit of large concessions, it cannot see that it is precisely its premises that are challenged; and it therefore shows the characteristic weakness of a threatened social order, the inability to know when to yield. It is afraid to inaugurate fundamental change partly because, like every class long accustomed to rule, it believes that the final bargain with history has been made, and partly because, out of that belief, it has the conviction that the more it yields the greater will be the demands upon it; the argument described by Bentham as the thin-end-of-the-wedge fallacy. The result is that at the very moment when its own safety calls it to overpass the traditional boundary of its premises, it identifies that boundary with the ultimate safety of society. It cannot conceive of security except upon its own terms; and not even the fate of the middle class in Russia and Germany makes it realise that security upon its own terms is no longer historically available.

The result is the unmistakable one that everywhere a species of morality is arising peculiar to those times of violent disorder in history when the traditional State-wisdom begins to break down. This is not merely the outcome of the war; for the war itself is the deposit of the situation I am seeking to describe. What is breaking down is respect for the idea of law because the laws made by the middle class can no longer contain the purposes which the masses believe to be socially valid. We are at one of those turning-points in history where what is required is, so to say, a diet of great reforms; but because such a diet is a departure from the traditional nutrition of middle-class security, the government is afraid of its consequences to the social digestion. That fear, as always, leads to the closed mind; and the closed mind, again as always, rapidly becomes the parent of intolerance and anger. We become involved in a grim antithesis where fundamental change is at once demanded and refused by men who will not examine the validity of one another's premises. That is a position where those compromises which are the essence of successful politics swiftly become impossible. Where we cannot settle differences by argument, in the end, conflicts of violence always supervene.

We confront the need, in fact, not for a concession here or there, but for a profound change in the spirit of our government. Either that must come from those who now rule, or the facts will compel a change in the mental atmosphere that will overthrow them. I do not pretend that it will be a change for the better. As in Germany, those may be brought to power out of the fear of chaos who will take our community into a new dark age. But, even if that be so, the only result will be to leave the new rulers confronting the same problems, and unable to resolve them unless they alter the ends to which the state is devoted. The new Germany has solved none of the problems the Weimar Republic failed to solve. It has only prepared for itself a more terrible revenge for the manner in which it has evaded them.

"It is not the mechanism of the laws that produces great events," Tocqueville told the French Chamber just before the overthrow of Louis Philippe, "but the inner spirit of government." An observer of the contemporary scene may well be tempted to repeat the warning he then gave. "Keep the laws as they are, if you wish," he said, "I think you would be wrong to do so; but keep them. Keep the men, too, if it gives you any pleasure. . . . But, in God's name, change the spirit of your government, for, I repeat, that spirit will lead you directly to the abyss." We cannot, I venture to think, too frequently remember those words in the present hour. Either the government of the middle class must co-operate with the workers in essential revisions as, a century ago, the aristocracy co-operated in that task with the middle class, or the forces of violent revolution will compel us to those changes that are being made elsewhere by civil and international war. And the chance of successful co-operation is rapidly passing from its grasp.

HAROLD J. LASKI

TALKING TO STRANGERS

SOME interesting excerpts from a German-English phrase-book were quoted in the *Times* the other day. The phrase-book, which has been prepared for the use of German soldiers, contains a number of phrases intended to be helpful in the course of conversation with English civilians, and, though the English is not always the English of Addison and Swift, the meaning at least is always clear. What, for example, could be more lucid than: "Tell the truth or you will be killed. But quickly, clergyman, write down the number of the English Army Corps"? If clarity is the ultimate perfection of prose, the German's English prose must be admitted to be perfect.

Equally incapable of being misunderstood is the sentence:

"Every driver that drives the wrong way will be shot." There have recently been a number of men of the highest talents who have been enthusiastic advocates of what is called liquidation, and here is the language of liquidation at its most crystal clear. The worst of it is, people who use language like this nowadays mean exactly what they say. Threatening language has always been popular, but in civilised countries it has until recently consisted largely of figures of speech. I once knew a cook who in moments of exasperation with the larder-raiding young would fiercely cry after them as they fled: "I'll shoot the boots off you." But her tongue was her only weapon, and out of range of her tongue there was safety. There were other minatory phrases in use at the time such as: "I'll tear the soul-case out of you," and "I'll tear the tripes out of you"; but tigerish speech was never followed by deeds as tigerish. Threats were mere forms of linguistic violence like the colourless "Damn you's," and "Blast you's," in which the significance of the "Damn" and "Blast" is completely forgotten.

I do not know to what extent the sentences quoted in the *Times* are representative of the general tone of the German phrase book. Possibly, they are exceptional, for we are told that soldiers are instructed in the book always to be polite and to say "Please." It is difficult, however, to see how the word "Please" could be appropriately fitted into such a sentence as: "Don't tell a lie, the village seems to be a wealthy one: I see it." "Don't tell a lie, please" would sound not polite, but sardonic. Nor would the clergyman be greatly reassured if a pinch of courtesy were added to the threat addressed to him and he were told to "tell the truth, please, or you will be killed." On the other hand, the sentence: "Where is the cash-box?" (quoted from the phrase-book) would undoubtedly sound, instead of brutal, almost friendly, if slightly altered to: "Where is the cash-box, please?" After that, the householder would be inclined almost to believe his visitor when, still quoting from the phrase-book, he said to him: "Don't fear anything, we are very peaceful," adding: "You must provide us with board and lodging."

It is a pity it seems to me, that the League of Nations did not years ago prepare an international phrase-book for use by soldiers of all nations in time of war. It is, we are constantly told, impossible to humanise war, but it is possible at least to minimise the inhumanity of war and to create (if not always to observe) standards of tolerable behaviour to enemies. I do not think that it has yet been proved that even in war brutality of speech pays better than a reasonable amount of courtesy. The brutal type of soldier will always be brutal enough without the assistance of the compiler of a phrase-book. Hence I think that the editor of *The Soldiers' English-German Phrase-Book**—an unofficial English counterpart of the German phrase-book quoted in the *Times*—has done well to omit threats of any kind from his suggested conversations. In the section headed "Occupation of a Place," there are, as was to be expected, plenty of orders, such as: "Shops closed at six o'clock," "All lights out at nine," "Please bring me a needle and thread," and "I want a bath tin." But there are almost as many sentences of reassurance to the German inhabitants. "Fear nothing," they are told. And again: "Our men don't loot." "We pay for what we get," "It is all right," "Sorry to disturb you," "We don't touch women and children," "You are obliging, many thanks," and "It is the fortune of war." There is a certain irony, perhaps, in teaching men engaged in war to say "Sorry to disturb you" to their enemies. But perhaps, too, it is the sensible thing to do.

There is a section in the book called "Tommy in Friendly Talk," which reveals him as the friendliest of enemies in his capacity of invader. Here we find him taught to say: "After the fight enemies must be friends" and even "The German beer is good"—a wonderful stretch of courtesy when we consider how few Englishmen ever praise the particular beer they are drinking. Again the soldier is taught to say: "Your brown bread is nourishing," though no Englishman of military age ever cared whether his bread was nourishing or not: all that he ever asked was that it should be white and like the bread he was used to at home. Still, there are occasions on which courtesy is more important than veracity and, if Englishmen can bring themselves to praise German bread or French cigarettes to their foreign hosts, it shows that, whatever good things may have perished in modern times, the knightly spirit is still alive.

The soldiers of the phrase-book—to their credit be it said—are eloquent in their enthusiasm for everything they find in Germany. "We have a nice hostess," they say to each other. "She cooks well," they go on. "Her soup," they declare, "is excellent." Compliments are exchanged: "You look very young" and when the hostess asks for a keepsake the English soldier replies: "I will give you a button."

There is not, so far as I have discovered, a single phrase in the book that has any but a courteous or a utilitarian purpose. Instead of asking, "Where is the cash-box?" the English soldier is taught to ask for "two yards of black elastic," or "a piece of scented soap," or "little sweet-cakes." "I want my knife sharpened," he says. Or: "Show me picture post-cards."

And he is taught to say "Thank you, Miss" in German as it is phonetically spelt, "Danka zair, Froy line," and to remember that "Germans are great sticklers for observing the correct forms of address," a gentleman being addressed according to his profession—Herr Doktor, Herr Pastor, Herr General, Herr Leutnant, etc. He is even told how without failing in courtesy to address a gardener's or a miller's wife.

It may be thought that this little book presents a rather rose-coloured view of the life of a soldier. On the whole, however, the picture of the English soldier as a good-natured human being bearing little malice to his enemies when he is not actually fighting them may be accepted as true. Those who know best say that in those parts of Germany in which he was stationed after the last war, he was on surprisingly good terms with the inhabitants, and shared his food with those who were in greater need of it. He is fundamentally easy-going, and belongs to what is perhaps the most easily pleased race on the earth. If you want to realise how tolerant he is, you have only to consider the jokes he will laugh at and the entertainments he will not only endure but applaud. The Englishman often grumbles, but he usually ends by accepting things as they are. That accounts for the state of English cookery.

In his attitude to foreigners he is particularly tolerant. He does not see why he should hate foreigners merely for being inferior to himself. Confronted with foreigners, he is conscious of none of that weakness imported from the Continent—the inferiority complex. Foreigners he finds mainly amusing. He has none of the instincts of a warrior race longing to do battle with its neighbours and to make their territories his spoil. That, perhaps, is why he makes so good a soldier. I think it was Mr. Brailsford who once contended that the most efficient fighting races are not the races that love fighting for its own sake, but the races that look on fighting as a nuisance and want to make an end of it as quickly as possible so that they may be able as soon as possible to go home.

The Greeks in the Trojan war were certainly like that. If it had not been for their leaders, indeed, they would have embarked on the black ships on several occasions even before the war was finished. A good case could be made out, I fancy, for the theory that the nations that are reluctant to fight make the best fighters.

Possibly, too, the soldiers who preserve the civic virtues best in wartime make the best soldiers. Most people would say that it proved to be so in the last war. It is, perhaps, better even from a military point of view to be able to say, "Sorry to disturb you" than "Where is the cash-box?" or "Tell the truth or you will be killed." It is certainly politer—and that, at least, is something.

Y. Y.

* *Werner Laurie, 9d.*

TERMINOLOGICAL EXACTITUDES

THE language of wartime must be re-defined
To clear up a general confusion of mind,
As new meanings are daily revealed;
Total warfare itself, now officially here,
Means warfare in every conceivable sphere,
Excepting, of course, in the field.

The nature and scope of the *hostile act*
Must be judged by those rulings minutely exact
While also remarkably vague;
From which all warring nations their precedents draw
In accord with approved international law
Which has something to do with the Hague.

Belligerent Powers we can best recognise
By their ardent desire for a just compromise
Plus their grasp of belligerent rights;
An *ally* is a State that keeps out or comes in,
According to which side seems likely to win,
And a *neutral* a country that fights.

SAGITTARIUS

Miscellany

CONFESSION OF A MAN SENTENCED TO DEATH

Mr. Chu Hsin-kong, literary editor of the *Ta Mei Wan Pao*, was assassinated in Shanghai on August 30th after disregarding a warning to cease publishing articles in opposition to Wang Chin-wei, whom the Japanese are trying to set up as a "puppet governor" at Nanking. This is a translation of Mr. Chu's reflections when he received this warning; he was assassinated shortly afterwards.

EVER since the withdrawal of the national forces from Shanghai, we have not heard about enforcement of law in the area surrounding the "Isolated Island" (Shanghai). If law still exists in these areas, then how can loafers, scoundrels and gamblers flourish? Now in the atmosphere of lawlessness and darkness, we suddenly hear about law—and a law that is directed against innocent people! This is utterly strange. What's more, the official handling the law has no offices. The "decision" is in the form of circulars. This type of "kidnapping style" is strangest of all.

Of the circulars issued by your "honourable" corps, I received one copy. Is it my bad luck? Is it my good luck to be so favoured? Reading the contents, I found that the circular warned me that persons would be sent to carry out my "death sentence" if I should write another article against Wang.

To live is just like being a soul temporarily stationed in this world. To die is to return to the old abode of the soul. My soul has been in this earthly world for about forty years. During this period, there has been more than one reason which could have caused my death. My income is small, sufficient only for a bare subsistence. I could not seek an official post, nor could I live with a feeling of being dependent on others. I have nothing but my thin, bony body. Poverty could have been the cause of my death.

Furthermore, my feeble, bony body could not have stood a single blow or dodge the "three calamities" as defined in Buddhism. Working day and night to earn a living and often attacked by illness, my own poor health could have been another cause of my death.

Having no money to pay for car-fare, I always walk. A slight carelessness could have been the cause of my death. And I like to drink, going to the wine shops whenever I can find time. Who knows that I could have contracted poisoning like the "new influentials" in Nanking when drinking, and die and become a "drunken ghost"?

In short, living in this present world, one may die at any moment and in any circumstances. Those who live are just the less unfortunate among the unfortunate people. When there is life, there is death. I am never afraid to die. Living in this "Isolated Island" for two years, I have already been like a "prisoner" awaiting death. I had only lived because "punishment" had not been given to the innocent and it is only for this reason that I have been blessed to live and daily meet my fellow "Isolated Islanders" through these columns.

Now your "honourable" corps has proclaimed my "death sentence." It is really a great favour. Because to die in such circumstances would be to die as a martyr. And to be a martyr is the most honourable form of death. I am just a poor scholar and how can I be thus honoured? I believe that I cannot be a martyr and my friends tell me that I will not be one. Now that your "honourable" corps wants to honour me with this title, how can I refrain from standing up proudly and patting my head in emulation of Mr. Wang Ching-wei who said "I'm doing justice to my young head" when captured in Peiping after trying to murder the Regent? I cannot say that my head is without value if it is shot through by a merciless bullet. When the head is of some value, why should I deplore my death?

But, while ready to die, I wish to die with everything cleared up rather than to die unwittingly. While your "honourable" corps is still showing some "leniency," I wish to say something. I hereby give you this confession at the time when I am doomed to die and waiting for my death. This will serve as a reply to your "honourable" corps and to the public.

In the opinion of your "honourable" corps, Wang Ching-wei's proposal for "peace" is similar to opposing the Reds, and since the most violent anti-Wang elements are Communists, all anti-Wang elements are all pro-Communist or utilised by the Reds. This kind of logic is mysterious and beyond my understanding. I am not a member of the Communist Party nor a member of the Kuomintang.

Furthermore, I have never had anything to do with members of the two parties. Yet even at the point of pistols and under the blades of axes no one can shake my opinion against Wang. If your "honourable" corps believes that I should be wiped out for my patriotism, I shall die without any complaint. If your "honourable" corps holds that I should be put to death for being anti-Wang, my death penalty is at least justified from your standpoint.

But if your "honourable" corps wants to kill me by calling me a Communist or one utilised by a Communist, I shall be a mischievous devil in the next world and clear my name. Otherwise, not only would you be laughed at by all the Communists but my name would unwarrantedly appear in the party history although I had always been a man without party affiliations. This honour I don't like to accept.

Your "honourable" corps must realise that I, Hsin-kong, have my own personality and character. If I had desired to be a party member, to-day my name would have appeared in the party history. I knew Wang Ching-wei twenty years ago. Within this period Wang has already risen and fallen in the political history three times, while I am still a plain, poor scholar. Here lies the difference between Wang's personality and mine. The reason why I am just a poor scholar is that I realise that I was born one.

Furthermore, you cannot accuse me of maliciously denouncing anyone. The page I edit never carries that kind of diatribe. When Wang Ching-wei made his "peace declaration" in Chungking, I wrote "On Peace." My conclusion was that "we are not opposed to peace, but no Chinese would support peace as desired by Wang Ching-wei." When Wang Ching-wei fled to Hanoi and demanded peace negotiations, I called him Ching Kwei (a premier of the Sung dynasty) because while in Chungking he merely advocated peace and had not shown any suspicion of being traitorious. Ching was a poor premier, but there had been no proof that he was a traitor.

To-day, Wang Ching-wei is quite different. He is going to accept a puppet order and come on to the political stage. He

has, in this way, discarded his role as Ching Kwei to become Liu Yu, who in the Sung dynasty accepted Dukedom of Chi conferred upon him by the Golden Tartars. If it is desired to wipe out all opposition against this Liu Yu, it is necessary to wipe out all Chinese. Otherwise, if there is still a Chinese, this lone survivor would continue to oppose him. I am a Chinese. Even if you kill me, what are you going to do with the rest of the 450,000,000? It is only futile to make an "exemplary case" out of me. Laotze appropriately said that when the people are not afraid of death, you cannot intimidate them with death.

I also wish to point out I am just like Wang Ching-wei in his former days. Wang in the old days proudly "sang in Peiping" (quoting a verse in Wang's poem), can I not "sing in Shanghai"? How do you know that I cannot, like Wang, stretch out my neck to wait for the blade?

Alas, I cannot escape. Nor can I surrender. The only alternative is to become a "convict awaiting execution." I know that if I die for that, my brother in the remote interior would say: "How nice is my brother. He is establishing a good name for the family!" My intimate friends would say: "Chu is dying an honourable death for righteousness." My wife, I think, would control herself and tell my little son: "Your father died because he did not like to be a slave. When you grow up, you must avenge his death." My young son would tell my soul: "Father, though you are dead, you are still a Chinese ghost. China will exist and peace be to your soul." Then my soul would rise to the seventh heaven and shine through the dark clouds over this part of China.

That's all I have to say and this can also be my last will. To live or to be killed is up to your conscience, for the historians will not spare you. I don't surrender, nor will I beg for mercy. What I do is guided by my conscience, approved by society and the will of God. If the will of God is not wiped out, Heaven will bless me. Jesus died on the cross to save the world. I may not be compared with Jesus but my readiness for sacrifice is the same as his. I live a useless life but may die as a hero. To die at this moment and at this place is really as good as honey. From now on, I shall daily carry with me a bottle of brandy and drink three cups, waiting for the arrival of the God of Death.

CHU HSIN-KONG

FROM THE FRONT

THE following, written at the Front, has come into my hands, and I think it may be of interest to others. I have transcribed all the relevant portions of the communication, merely altering or omitting a few words here and there. I imagine that the writer, a Commanding Officer of Territorials, expresses the thoughts of a good number of people besides himself.

This war has put its finger in the works of the lives of most of us just when they were at their busiest. But there is no need to grumble. We are all experiencing much. The time I am "losing" I might have applied to making money, or to endeavouring to acquire other vanities, such as fame or pleasure. Instead, I am being forced to acquire the most solid, valuable thing—experience.

True, I have a contra-account with Fate. The society of loved ones foregone; music, art, all the civilising influences of existence banished; life certainly brutalised. And, most of all, a burning, unappeasable anger at the senseless futility of it all—the barbaric system that still lets mankind descend to the beasts in his ordering of life.

It is no good talking of "a good cause." That is beside the point in the feeling I have. We fight in a good cause. But no one should have to fight in any cause. While anarchy reigned in England, before the days of laws and policemen, it was possible to kill a man in the street "in a good cause." One may still have a good cause; but one does not still have to kill men in the street. That is because we have organised our lives, because we have become more civilised. And when mankind has had sufficient sense to organise itself internationally as it has organised itself nationally, it will no longer be necessary to fight in a good cause. Till that day we human beings are but poor semi-barbaric creatures, and our diplomacy and Parliaments but the tawdry beads and trappings of the savage.

Perhaps it is no use grumbling. Humanity will go its own pace. One should not grumble. The true spirit is Rupert Brooke's: "If this is Armageddon, I suppose one ought to be in it."

But it is only human to do a little grumbling. We sit in sterile and uncivilised places, and ask why England seems to show no greatness, fails to seize this opportunity of crushing certain evils and organising the nation for ever; bungles here, and botches there. We laugh with contempt at those who are afraid to tell us the truth. We grouse because our days seem wasted and our lives degraded. We gaze with irritated derision on the spectacle of the political world apparently bunkuming away as much as ever, and on the picture of the social world covering its usual vanities with a war-veneer. We long that the Secretaries of State, diplomatists, editors and other oracles should come, not merely on fleeting visits to us, but to spend some convincing time in trenches or billets. We envy those who are in their homes or in soft jobs. But—this is Armageddon, and we must be in it. Somewhere in Armageddon we must be. We may die. Then there is no more to bother about. We may survive. Then—after the war——

Ah, after the war! One dare not think of it. But for some at least it will come. And then, let us hope, we may have learnt wisdom and humility. When humanity sounds the roll-call after the battle, let the names of the dead not be accounted in vain. Let nation join with nation in mourning the men who fought, all of them, in what they, at least, thought "a good cause." Let pettiness and uncharitableness and mean-spiritedness be buried, and let man join with man in trying to repair the ravages man joined with man to make.

The true victory will be the victory of the higher elements of humanity. The true defeat will be the defeat of our better selves. We say we are fighting against certain hateful, cramping, and vicious principles. Let us see to it that in the moment of victory we are not conquered. For the real victory of Prussianism will be if its enemies are Prussianised.

And now let me give the show away—if it has not already been given away by that last sentence, in which "Prussian" should be "Nazi." All that *was* written from the Front by a Commanding Officer—in the war of 1914–1918. It was written, then, by myself.

A bit ironic it sounds to-day, doesn't it? But maybe it will do with being written again.

Maybe it will do with being written again every war.

Until perhaps some day there shall be no need to write it.

ELIOT CRAWSHAY WILLIAMS

THE MOVIES

"The Stars Look Down," at the Odeon
"Pièges," at the Cinephone

Novels such as A. J. Cronin's, in which humorous characters and incidents are introduced and subordinated to a central idea, seem to suffer badly in translation to the screen. The emphasis shifts: some characters assume exaggerated importance, others do not appear at all, some incidents are omitted, others enlarged, and the result is a misleading synopsis, with the theme relegated to the background. *The Citadel*, the first of Dr. Cronin's novels to be made into a film, suffered just such a fate—for instance, the ignorant committee-men who destroyed the doctor's life work on anthracite dust emerged as a dramatic device, the corrupt Harley Street doctors as amusing character sketches, losing their significance as personifications of ignorance, greed and prejudice. Perhaps because the cinema, with its star system, is forced to concentrate on personality, abstract ideas are of necessity forced into the background, for despite a valiant effort *The Stars Look Down* has been unable to escape the very same fate as *The Citadel*. Readers of Dr. Cronin's novel will remember it as a plea for general reform and specially the exorcising of corruption in the coal mining industry: into this framework was fitted a number of subsidiary themes; the love story of the intelligent, ambitious reformative young miner and his career as a politician; the success of his money-grubbing fellow miner; the interwoven lives of the inhabitants of the mining village; the book was a mass of incident dependent on a central idea, a sort of lesser *Germinal*. This is exactly reversed in the film: the central theme becomes the young miner's love affair with the feather-brained usherette, for which the mining village provides a background, and corruption in the mining industry, action and incident. Nevertheless the film is genuinely most moving. The dangerous pit ever on the point of being flooded, the drab mining village, the gloom and depression of a strike, the agonising waiting of the families of the victims in the inevitable disaster, are poignant to the point of tears. And the disaster itself; the water slowly trickling then bursting through the pit wall; the increasing rush towards the camera as the flood sweeps away props, crushing and drowning

men as they lie hacking at the coal face; the mad stampede to safety, and the vain efforts to rescue five miners trapped deep down in the old workings, all these are almost unbearable. When the camera concentrates on impersonal things the film is at its best—shots of the pit-head, the grim village, the cages dropping into the pit with their load of miners, these and the silent crowds provide the real drama of the picture. Too many of the minor characters have the embarrassed air of performers in an amateur charade. British actors appear to be extremely inept at portraying the working class—their accents are forced, their manner supremely unnatural, their emotions exaggerated—so that English social films in comparison with French or American always suffer from a certain unreality. Michael Redgrave's performance as David Fenwick is an exception; quiet and convincing, it achieves a moving climax, when in a brilliantly directed scene he pleads with his Trade Union committee to bring the men out on strike rather than allow them to go on working the dangerous sections of the pit. Nancy Price as his mother gives a performance pregnant with rather incomprehensible meaning, Margaret Lockwood is miscast as the selfish usherette, seeming both too intelligent and too ladylike to carry conviction, and Emlyn Williams gives a good Emlyn Williams performance. Carol Reed is a director who knows how to use the camera as well as how to direct his actors, a very rare combination; he should, however, avoid the exaggeration of tense restraint to the point of inaudibility.

With *The Stars Look Down* the newly awakened social conscience of the film world has reached England. The democratic moral is not so pointed as it is in some American films and the Trade Unions are treated rather shabbily. But a mining community is presented with a realism which glosses over none of the dangers and hardships, and one man's struggle for reform is treated sympathetically. The film, in short, is about life as it is and that is promising for the future of English Films as well as an achievement in itself.

A new cinema, the Cinephone, offers for its debut a French picture *Pièges*. The cinema is comfortable, well designed, and conveniently situated; the film provides a pleasant excuse for a visit. Starting off as a *roman policier*, *Pièges* gives the impression of having been made up as it went along. Or is it because Maurice Chevalier has somewhat incongruously wandered on to the screen, that we have to abandon a series of exciting adventures in favour of light comedy and song, pleasant enough but an exasperating interruption? Marie Dea, who is exceedingly charming and attractive, undergoes a series of Pearl White experiences, marries Maurice Chevalier, and almost settles down, when the excitement begins all over again. The story is flavoured with that degree of *psychologie* so popular in French detective fiction (*est-ce que vous avez lu Freud* says the villain with a mad glance) and the dénouement is muddled through on psychological grounds. Maurice Chevalier is as delightful as ever, though it is a mystery how he ever came to be cast in this film, and the direction and acting are well above the average. The opening sequences are intensely exciting; it's a pity the film can't keep it up.

ANTHONY BOWER.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Follow My Leader," at the Apollo

Satires on dictatorship must be very good to be memorable and very bad to be intolerable, and *Follow My Leader*, like most of its kind, falls midway between the two extremes. The story of a simple-witted plumber who is made dummy dictator to resolve the rivalry of the Party's two real leaders should offer unlimited scope for the simpler sorts of humour, and the sight of the poor lumpen-Hitler before the microphone, yelling the ferocious harangues that a lounging secretary dictates to him sentence by sentence makes an amusing picture that the authors exploit to the fullest possible extent. Some of the jokes are good ("I had a nasty moment at the Conference. I thought for an instant they were going to accept our demands"), and if the satire is a trifle weak it is pleasantly free from rancour. The production is fortunate in having the services of that fine actor Mr. Walter Hudd, whose performance as the Himmler of the Movement seems to lend sparkle and vigour to the play as a whole. Mr. Francis L. Sullivan gives an entertaining study in jolly Goering-esque; and Mr. Reginald Beckwith, made up as Charlie Chaplin and even supported by a Waif thinly disguised as a tough female reporter, does the best with his better lines. *Follow My Leader* succeeds in being good fun; but one is surprised that the author of *French Without Tears* could do no better than Ruritanian without overmuch laughter.

Sadler's Wells and the Arts Theatre Club

The last week of the Vic-Wells ballet's too short season is memorable for the production of a new ballet by Frederick Ashton in which, obviously under the impulse of a strong impersonal emotion, he enters a domain of dancing which calls for a new technique from classical dancers, and he and his dancers emerge triumphant. His ballet is frankly expressionistic; the dancers go barefooted and with hair unbound. *Dante Sonata* has no more reference to temporal events than Liszt's exquisite *Sonate d'après une lecture de Dante* which it interprets, but one cannot help feeling a poignant symbolism in this interpretation in terms of dance movement of the brief and passionate vision of the Inferno and Purgatory which Liszt has rendered in terms of music. There are no characterisations, no story; only the opposing attitudes of two opposing groups of equally tortured spirits, whose leaders in the end alike suffer crucifixion. This welter of contrasting tragic forces is, as in the music, relieved by passages of exquisite lyricism. The daring plastic inventions of the choreographer demand often an acrobatic technique, but this is always subservient to expression. Some of the fleeting patterns which form and dissolve among the welter of human bodies are breath-taking in their beauty, and even at this early stage of the ballet's performance, astonishingly clear, though it is evident that the precision born of long practise will bring greater clarity. For instance, at one point four men have to leap repeatedly into the air out of a group of agitated figures, and their pillar-like rigidity is structurally very significant; but it is essential that they should all leap exactly together. The interpretation of the musical form is occasionally too literal, though it may be that the nervous exasperation produced by this was intentional! Liszt's piano sonata is beautifully scored for orchestra by Constant Lambert, and the piano solos were superbly played by that finest of Liszt players, Louis Kentner. The horizontal white lines below some cloud arabesques, on Sophie Fedorovitch's blue backcloth, give a lovely suggestion of space, and her costumes, after Flaxman, are absolutely effective in their great simplicity. The side-lighting produced some impressive and legitimate effects of shadow. No ballet in one's memory has received such an ovation since the first performance in Paris of *The Green Table* by the then unknown Kurt Jooss.

The London Ballet at the Arts Theatre has now been replaced by the second member of the amalgamated ballet-trinity, the Arts Theatre Ballet. The London Ballet has been lacking in artistic direction, owing to the absence of its choreographic director and *maîtresse de ballet* in two different continents, and in spite of the fine dancing of Peggy van Praagh, Maude Lloyd and others, has achieved no great success either choreographically or musically. Frank Staff's ballet, *The Seasons*, from which one had expected some pleasure after his *Czernyana* produced by the Rambert Ballet, was in every element of its production cheaper fare than one had hoped the Arts Theatre Club would provide, and showed only too clearly the lack of a single artistic direction.

The Victoria and Albert Museum

The opening of a section of the V. and A. is a matter for congratulation. Entering by the Exhibition Road door, one finds a very pleasing selection from the Sheepshanks bequest—early Victorian pictures, sometimes of peasants and country boys in landscapes, similar in inspiration to the milder poems of Wordsworth, sometimes of historical scenes in which the atmosphere remains amusingly Victorian. Altogether a delightful way of escape into an optimistic world. Next there is a lot of the usual ironwork, and a collection of Japanese objects ranging from the beautifully crustacean armour of the Samurai to a late nineteenth century bronze of peacocks which must be one of the ugliest artifacts in Europe. Upstairs there are a few excellent modern textiles, a varied assembly of modern lithographs, and a collection of brass-rubbings which reveals the remarkable aesthetic powers of the mediaeval English. These deserve and repay very careful study. Is it too much to hope that the Trustees of our other museums will pluck up courage? To bring the masterpieces of Botticelli and Titian, Guardi and Seurat to London would be unpardonable, but in the Galleries, particularly the Tate, there are a mass of secondary works that could be risked. An exhibition, for instance, of all the pictures of the Chantrey Bequest would certainly be both cautionary and comical.

THE COMING WEEK

SATURDAY, January 27th—
R. W. Orme: "U.S.A. and the Federal System," Economic Reform Club, 2.30.
Very Rev. Dean of Canterbury: "Moral Aspects of the Soviet Union," Conway Hall, 3.
SUNDAY, January 28th—
Prof. H. Levy: "Science in the Service of Man," Conway Hall, 11.
Beecham Sunday Concert, Queens Hall, 2.45.
MONDAY, January 29th—
Kingsley Martin: "The Technique of Propaganda," Birkbeck College, 1.15.
Prof. H. Lauterpacht: "Sovereignty and Federation in International Law," Canterbury Hall, Cartwright Gardens, W.C.1, 5.
TUESDAY, January 30th—
A.I.A. Everyman Prints Exhibition will be opened by Sir Kenneth Clark at Picture Hire Gallery, 56 Brook Street, 12.
Roger Carter: "Understanding Germans," Friends House, 1.20.
Prof. A. Meusel: "Seven Years' Fight Against Nazism," Conway Hall, 7.45.
WEDNESDAY, January 31st—
Charles Vereker: "Federal Union," Dick Sheppard Centre, 8.
THURSDAY, February 1st—
Sir Richard Gregory: "Science and Human Values," Royal Empire Society, 2.
Engel Lund and Ferdinand Rauter singing Folk Songs from many Lands, Queen Mary Hall, 5.15. Tickets 1s. and 2s. 6d.
London Philharmonic Orchestra, with Moiseiwitsch, Queens Hall, 7.
Rt. Hon. H. B. Lees-Smith: "The War, a Weekly Survey," Canterbury Hall, 7.30. And on six following Thursdays.
FRIDAY, February 2nd—
Housing Centre Conference on "Problems of Social Environment and the War," Royal Inst. of British Architects, 10.30–4.
Recital of Works for Two Violins, Jelly D'Aranyi and Adila Fachiri, Birkbeck College, 1. Tickets 1s. and 2s. 6d.

Correspondence

SCIENCE AND THE U.S.S.R.

SIR,—The prestige of natural science, due to its high intellectual standards and its great practical importance, has led to curious consequences in its exploitation by unscrupulous persons. Some of those consequences are well known, such as the use of current scientific jargon, often meaningless as used, for promoting the sale of patent foods and medicines and of electrical and other devices for the treatment of disease. Others are more subtle, for example the employment of the word "research" as a disguise for propaganda, or of science and scientific men to advertise political ideas.

The Royal Society is not infrequently invited to lend its name to projects or institutions of apparently high intention. Some of these are worthy enough, others are merely sentimental, others obviously political, some are not at all what they seem. The Society takes care before it commits itself and avoids meddling with matters which are not its concern. Not so, however, the Academy of Sciences of the Soviet Union. At the time of the Trotskyist trials the President and eighteen members of the Academy expressed an opinion as follows, in the Astronomical Journal of the Soviet Union, Vol. 14:

> Having sold themselves to the Fascists . . . this despicable gang of human degenerates, or servants of Fascistic cannibals, being led by the agent of the Gestapo, the bandit Trotsky, was selling our socialistic country and its riches to the worst enemies of human progress . . . We demand the annihilation of the despicable degenerates! . . . The scientific workers will give all their knowledge and strength . . . for the increased strength of the Red Army —that faithful guardian of frontiers.

The phraseology of the recent Russian threat, that the faithful Red Army will cut in atoms the White Finnish reptile, might have been derived from the same scientific source.

For many years it has been regarded as a sign of intellectual superiority to accept the scientific claims of the Soviet Union at their face value. Those who knew better held their peace, not wishing to cause a disturbance or to hinder any possible improvement in friendly relations. I have worked hard myself and have used such influence as I could to establish friendly connections with Russian scientists: admittedly with rather poor success. Since, however, the disturbance has now been caused by Russia's own acts, and since friendly relations with Russian scientists are clearly impossible, the facts had better be stated.

In many fields the claims for Russian science are fraudulent. This is no fault of the Russian scientists themselves, and the claims are not usually made by them: it is the fault of their Government, which for many years has cut them off from all outside help and criticism, has encouraged and rewarded the advertising merchant rather than the genuine investigator, has confused discovery with politics and has eliminated (like the Nazis) those whose views do not conform to the standard pattern. For years an imposing stunt about "mitogenetic rays" was kept up, obviously under official encouragement; hundreds of papers were published, all on the same model; but the "rays" do not really exist. Kapitza, who was a Royal Society Research Professor and worked in Rutherford's laboratory, was forcibly detained in Russia during an incautious visit: had there really been so many glorious Red physicists as one was told, this unusual method of increasing their number should have been unnecessary. Huge buildings are put up to accommodate research in physiology and medicine. The hundreds of charming and eager young people in them have been starved of contact with the outside scientific world, whether by travel, by visiting scientists or by literature: not for lack of funds (the Government could find money when it wanted to, as in buying Kapitza's apparatus from Cambridge; and the Rockefeller Foundation was always ready to give Fellowships) but in order to keep them in political blinkers. In spite of their multitude, few people outside Russia trouble to read the products of their research. Mass boasting of Soviet achievement has not disguised the fact that Russian geneticists are torn by faction about the application of dialectical materialism to genetics. Pavlov's famous work was boosted for its anti-god appeal; religion was a conditioned reflex (so, one remembers, are many of the catchwords both of proletarians and intellectuals): but Pavlov himself had no part in such nonsense and proudly said to me once that he was the son and the grandson of a priest and his wife the daughter of a priest.

In 1935 the 15th International Congress of Physiology was held in Leningrad and Moscow, and the honour and expense which were lavished on it were almost beyond belief. The wine, the feasts, the entertainments, the publicity; the intense interest, eagerness and friendliness of the scientific people themselves; the dinner for a thousand physiologists in the Kremlin with Molotov and members of the Government (and an armed officer on both sides of each end of every table); a conference between the International Committee and the Government, at which we were asked what further could be done to develop Russian physiology; a firework display and a banquet near Leningrad, which must have cost thousands of pounds; all these gave the impression of a deep devotion of the Soviet Union to science and medicine on the one hand, to international scientific co-operation on the other. . . . In 1938 the 16th Congress was held in Zurich. Not one visitor came from Russia; letters, telegrams produced no reply; many hundreds of Russian physiologists were denied their dearest wish of joining the reunion of their colleagues. . . . Was it really devotion to science and to international co-operation in 1935, or political propaganda?

In 1935 the "Fascistic cannibals" were so unpopular in Leningrad that an organised (if inhospitable) stunt in the press sent the German members of the Congress into hysterics, and they could with difficulty be restrained from abrupt departure. Insulted German professors are difficult to appease. To-day Stalin and Hitler exchange birthday greetings and seal their friendship in blood. Stalin has seen the advantages of cannibalism. In 1935 Molotov spoke to the Congress about "physiology which frees man from all the cobwebs of mysticism and religious survivals" (but not, presumably, from proletarian catchwords): he mentioned the generous anxiety of "the Soviet public for the position of scientists in capitalist countries" and announced that "*the Soviet Union is a mighty bulwark of Science and Peace.*" So great, indeed, was the concern for our well-being that, walking one evening through the streets of Moscow with a Russian friend, Dirac and I were followed continually by two detectives, a privilege never afforded to us in capitalist countries. Doubtless the detectives are still flourishing, but the bulwark of science and peace has given place to other slogans about the need to preserve "democracy" in Finland.

Claims have frequently been made that the Government of the Soviet Union spends more money on science than does that of any other country. The comparison depends upon the assumed value of the rouble: and, moreover, in Russia the Government is the sole support of science, while in Britain and the United States (to take two examples) financial aid is derived chiefly from other

than government agencies. The net effect, in fact, is the contrary of the Russian claim: and scientists in these "capitalist" countries have the advantage of freedom from government control and interference, of liberty to travel, read, criticise and think as they wish. Genetics in the United States is not confused by arguments about dialectical materialism: Britain does not need to kidnap its scientists normally resident in America when they return for a vacation: nor at Congresses on the History of Science does the government of either country put up half-a-dozen puppets to bore the meetings by impassioned statements about Marxian philosophy (this really happened in London in 1931). Solid achievement doubtless has been made by Russian science: it would be easier, however, to recognise it and give it credit if it were not overlaid by fraud and propaganda. One hoped that by holding one's tongue and trying quietly and patiently to encourage friendly relations between reasonable people, some sense of objectivity and criticism might gradually find their way into the machinery. One's hopes have been denied. Much adulation has been lavished on Soviet achievements in science: the purpose of that adulation has been political, not scientific: but now that Molotov's claim to be a "mighty bulwark of peace" is seen in its true perspective one might as well be clear that the claim to be a "mighty bulwark of science" supplies an equal test of one's credulity.

A. V. HILL

WAR AIMS AND SECURITY

SIR,—I wonder whether you will allow a German to make a remark about Mr. Crossman's article on "British War Aims and French Security." Mr. Crossman seems to admit that it is untrue "that the Germans are eternal barbarians," and he thinks "it is equally untrue that there is any sharp line between the Nazis and the German people, or that a liberal-democratic régime is likely to succeed that of Herr Hitler."

It is very difficult to make generalisations about the national character of a nation. The Germans are obedient and disciplined, even the party-machine of the Social-Democratic party was a machinery to teach obedience. Luther and Bebel are in the same line. Of course, a liberal democratic régime is not likely to follow the Nazi dictatorship. Incidentally, what does Mr. Crossman understand by a "liberal democratic régime"? I would agree with him that Herr Vogel and his other comrades in Paris will have no further chance of founding a second Weimar Republic.

The majority of Germans, I feel, have learnt their lesson. The French democrats who founded the third French Republic have never forgotten Napoleon III's dictatorship. The Nazi education has not yet taken as deep roots as Mr. Crossman seems to think. Seven years are not long enough to make new traditions. Here, I think, Mr. Crossman makes a profound mistake, though I admit that "the younger generation will be difficult to handle."

I should regard it as disastrous if those who frame the propaganda policy of this country agreed with Mr. Crossman that there is no sharp dividing line between the Nazis and the majority of the German people. I do not deny, as the Prime Minister has put it very aptly, that this majority has now the same responsibility as the Nazi Government, but this does not mean that there is no dividing line between them.

This majority, I am confident, is open to any constructive European reconstruction, provided we do not force them, as Mr Crossman proposes, to stick to Hitler.

Mr. Crossman sees only the German façade. He overlooks the silent growth of a new social élite which is as clear about the necessity of French security as he is himself. It is one of the tasks of Allied propaganda not to estrange their Allies within Germany. They will be heard of—sooner or later.

GERMAN-SOCIALIST

SIR,—Will you allow me to tread on one or two of the outlying skirts of the vast length of controversial coat which Mr. Crossman trailed over three columns of your last issue? The object of the trailing appears to have been to censure the inclusion of Federal Union among our peace aims as dangerously Utopian, and to ask us to accept instead a good old-fashioned peace imposed by Anglo-French force of arms.

One of the arguments for putting forward Federal Union as a peace aim is that it may induce the Germans to make peace earlier than they would have done, if they were convinced that to call off their armies would be to leave themselves at the Allies' mercy, of the quality of which they have already had a taste at Versailles. Mr. Crossman disposes of this argument by saying "Do not promise what you know you cannot, with any sense of responsibility to your own peoples, fulfil." But why should it be assumed that we cannot with any sense of responsibility to our peoples fulfil such a promise? If we want Federal Union badly enough, and if enough of us want it badly enough, it is by no means certain that we cannot bring it into the realm of practical politics; at least it is worth trying. If nobody had ever promised more than it was certain that they could perform, society would be the poorer, for the achieved reform is the child of the unachieved ideal. Mr. Crossman's argument is only valid if the case which he is attacking has already gone by default.

Mr. Crossman proceeds, "To deceive them" (the Germans) "might possibly shorten the war, but it would certainly once again produce the evils of Versailles which British idealists are so fond of denouncing." This apparently means that if we promise Federal Union and do not bring it off, we shall again produce a Versailles peace. But what is Mr. Crossman's warrant for assuming that we cannot in fact bring it off? Mr. Crossman begins by taking it for granted that Federal Union is impracticable and then says that this being so, to promise it is to deceive the Germans. But whether it is impracticable or not is precisely the point at issue; nor is he entitled to derive an argument for its impracticability from an assumption which is only valid provided that it is in fact impracticable?

And what, one would like to know, is the alternative to a Federal Union peace which, being deceptive, would "produce once again the evils of Versailles"? Presumably the evils of a Versailles peace imposed without deception.

Having noted with interest Mr. Crossman's report of the alleged discovery by the French that "you cannot defend your own internal civilisation unless you are prepared to back civilisation beyond your frontiers" and deduced from the context that the words "to back" mean to be prepared, if required, to kill outside one's frontiers in defence of the civilisation within one's frontiers, I find it difficult to deny myself the pleasure of asking Mr. Crossman how many people Denmark, Sweden and Switzerland have killed or been prepared to kill outside their frontiers in defence of the civilisation which admittedly prevails within them? If Mr. Crossman tells me that Sweden and Denmark are to-day in considerable danger, I should agree that this is so, but point out that it is so because great Powers are at war; it is so, that is to say, precisely because of their willingness to kill the citizens of other Powers outside their own frontiers, which Mr. Crossman apparently regards or believes the French to regard as a guarantee of peace.

Finally, we are told of the apprehension felt by the French, an apprehension which Mr. Crossman shares, lest we should demobilise after victory. Instead, we are apparently to perform with the French the duty which is politely called "policing Europe"; that is to say, of continuing to impose our will upon defeated Germans by superior force of arms.

Whether Mr. Crossman is right in assuming, as he seems to do, that the French are among those who persistently refuse to learn from history, I do not know, but whether or no the French are incorrigible, I propose to pay Mr. Crossman the compliment of assuming that he is not, and to beg him to reflect upon the lesson taught by the settlements of the wars of the past, of which that of 1918–1939 affords at once the latest and most glaring example, which is that you cannot permanently make defeated countries submit to dictated terms which they conceive to be unjust, and that if you try, you will, sooner or later, provoke them to build up either openly or secretly a force superior to that by means of which the dictation is imposed. 1918 in fact leads to 1939, and the dreary business begins all over again. It is precisely in order to avoid this wearisome repetition that some of us propose Federal Union as a peace aim, thereby hoping to induce the Germans to join with us in a settlement willed and desired by all instead of offering them only the alternative of another dictated peace which, having no basis of good will in men's hearts, will subsist only so long as the bayonets by means of which it is imposed are available for its enforcement.

C. E. M. JOAD

[Mr. Crossman replies: "Professor Joad seems to have misunderstood my argument. If he had read it to the end, he would have seen that it was not an argument against Federal Union, but an argument that plans for Federal Union should (1) include measures of security; (2) be made acceptable to responsible French opinion, and (3) be developed out of the war-co-operation of the Allies. Since any form of international government would need an army (or police force), I find it difficult to understand how Professor Joad, an avowed pacifist, can sponsor Federal Union or any other plan which involves the use of force."—ED., N.S. & N.]

THE BY-ELECTION TRUCE

SIR,—At the present time a by-election is of more than local importance. Perhaps, therefore, you will allow us to explain why the University Labour Party is not contesting the by-election in Cambridge University.

Our prospective candidate, Mr. Kingsley Martin, was ready to stand, and the General Meeting of the Party held on January 18th was most anxious to put him forward. Our agreement that war is now the only alternative to capitulation to Hitlerism is not, in our view, at all the same thing as acceptance of the present Government, and we cannot agree that the contesting of by-elections will interfere with the efficient prosecution of the war. This is especially true of a University by-election, where there are no public meetings, where removals will not affect the register and where the ballot is by post. We have, however, been informed by the national officers of the Labour Party that the agreement not to nominate candidates for the Party where the seat has been Conservative or Liberal is a written one and provides for no exceptions. Solely because of this ruling we have reluctantly decided not to contest this election.

Nevertheless we should not wish it to be supposed that we are in agreement with the policy of the "by-election truce." Like many other people who are not members of the Labour Party we have the strongest criticism to offer of the Government for its failure to make clear to our own people and to neutral powers whether this war is being fought for British Imperialism or really for democracy (a failure illustrated especially in the Government's attitude to India), for its policy on wages and prices, on education and other matters. We ask how, if we are not to be allowed to contest by-elections, this criticism can ever be made effective and how there can be any indication, except lawless ones, whether the policies of the Government have or have not general support? This country cannot remain a living democracy if democratic functions are allowed to atrophy on a plea of practical necessity which cannot, at the present stage of the war, be accepted at all.

We should like to add that although there will be no Labour candidate in this by-election, Mr. Kingsley Martin remains our prospective candidate for the first by-election after the termination of the "truce."

JOSEPH NEEDHAM (Chairman),
H. L. ELVIN (Secretary),
Cambridge University Labour Party.

JOHN RANDALL

SIR,—The death, at an advanced age, of Mr. John Randall will be lamented by many who contributed to, or were otherwise connected with, the *Athenæum*, of which he was proof-reader from 1875 until its amalgamation in 1921 with the *Nation*.

A man more devoted to the tradition in which he grew up, in spite of the heavy labour and monotony of his earlier period in the office, can scarcely be imagined. To hear him mention the editors under whom he had worked, but particularly Mr. MacColl, was to hear the voice of true loyalty: and John Randall equally honoured the families of Dilke and Francis, associated with the best of English literary journals since 1830.

Those who remember the *Athenæum* office during Mr. Middleton Murray's editorship will have seen John Randall with his still Victorian style of clothes, and courteous formality of manner, ever busy with his files of proofs. Armed with his little handbooks of English usage, he pursued with mild voice but stern purpose all those eccentricities which writers consider essential to their particular styles. He had come into an age of looser grammar than that in which he grew up—but he never despaired of us!

The chief recreation which we understood him to take was an occasional afternoon watching a cricket match. He welcomed the easier working conditions of the modern press, and indeed the increased opportunities and resources of recent years: but as an example of the personal worth matured in an earlier period John Randall deserves a finer commemoration than the present hand is capable of.

EDMUND BLUNDEN

IRISH GUNPOWDER

SIR,—My article dealing with the sudden change in the hitherto peaceful atmosphere of Eire consequent upon the seizure of a huge haul of ammunition from the magazine fort in Dublin evidently displeased Mr. K. Arnold Price.

He says that I had no excuse for writing "Shops in Dublin were bright with twinkling lights, cinemas blazed with neon pencillings. Eire was a peace zone. All that has changed now."

Obviously these sentences were intended to convey to the reader the peacefulness of Dublin before thousands of soldiers and volunteers were sent on foot and in lorries throughout the country searching for the missing ammunition. Irish papers of the time indicated clearly how the appearance of the country was altered to that of a war zone by the largely successful zeal of the military. I doubt if any other reader besides Mr. Price could draw from these passages the implication that Eire was now at war or the fantastic view that Dublin had darkened its lights, presumably to guard against I.R.A. air raids!

In his letter Mr. Price introduced the question of the emergency legislation just passed by the Eire Government containing powers to intern citizens without trial. Whether this is quite consistent with a state of peace is a question for Mr. Price to thrash out. I did not raise it in my article—which dealt strictly and accurately with the effects of the Magazine Fort raid. So I am afraid I cannot help him to unravel himself here.

R. M. Fox

39 The Rise, Griffith Avenue, Dublin.

CONDITIONS IN POLAND

SIR,—The following letter which has reached me about conditions in Warsaw may interest your readers:

> I am profiting by the kindness of the Consul to let you know that we are both in good health and leading a cave-man existence, trying to avoid immediate danger, to get food, and to protect ourselves against the cold. None of these tasks is easy, and the two latter take three-quarters of our time, but we do them as well as we can. We have to use all our physiological knowledge to make our meals, and at present manage to satisfy our hunger. As for the house, there is no glass left in any of the windows, only cardboard, and there are a number of holes in the walls. Until yesterday there was no electricity, so that our day only lasted from 6.30 in the morning till 4 in the afternoon, but for some time past we have had running water, although the inhabitants of many neighbouring houses have still to fetch theirs from some distance. We have no newspapers nor wireless and are absolutely ignorant of what is going on in the world outside. Our store of money, food and coal may last for a couple of months, if nothing untoward occurs.
>
> On the other hand, the Institute is completely destroyed. Apart from the complete cessation of salaries and of funds for maintaining the building, there is much direct damage. The Library was cut in half by a bomb, and the lower floor (the . . . Laboratory of the Faculty of Science) was set on fire by shells. All glass apparatus is in a thousand pieces and everything made of metal has completely rusted. The staircase has collapsed and rain is coming in through the broken windows and the holes in the roof. All valuable objects and anything which could be used for domestic life have been stolen by the demoralised population. Not only is there no possibility of resuming experimental work, but it is impossible to look after what apparatus is left, since the building cannot be heated and the temperature outside is well below zero.
>
> We therefore decided that P. should finish his book on . . . . Three-quarters of it are done, and you know that we think it is important (if the pre-war categories of importance are still valid) because it brings some order into a domain where there was much confusion and misunderstanding. It is much easier to take with one a finished manuscript than the actual experimental notebooks, the notes on the literature, the reprints, etc. You will understand that we are anxious to leave this country as soon as possible, and that we are relying a great deal on the help and initiative of friends in neutral countries. Such efforts must bear mainly on P., for it is much easier that a wife should leave with her husband.
>
> We are thus making use of all the time left free by cooking and stopping up holes in walls, for work as intense as possible on the monograph mentioned above. At present I am translating some of the chapters into French. It is even rather amusing to try to accomplish a serious piece of work in circumstances where the coming day, and even the coming night, are full of uncertainty and danger. It is like people in a lifeboat in the middle of the ocean studying Chinese. There is no evidence that they are like to reach any coast, still less the Chinese coast, but that does not stop them from taking their task seriously and doing it as best they can in the time they have.
>
> From the material point of view, we are trying to limit our expenses to the strictest minimum necessary for subsistence, in order to prolong as far as possible the period during which we can hold out until the moment of departure. . . .

There is hope that the writers of this courageous and moving letter will be able to come to Western Europe to continue their scientific work during the war. The Society for the Protection of Science and Learning, which is helping so many in like position, is now temporarily established in the Polar Research Institute, Lensfield Road, Cambridge, where contributions to a fundamental effort in the salvage of our civilisation may be sent.

CAMBRIDGE SCIENTIST

Current Literature

GAS AT ABBOTSFORD

EITHER Scott the novelist is swallowed whole and becomes part of the body and brain, or he is rejected entirely. There is no middle party in existence—no busybodies run from camp to camp with offers of mediation. For there is no war. The novels of Dickens, Trollope, Henry James, Tolstoy, the Brontës—they are discussed perpetually; the Waverley novels never. There they remain completely accepted, entirely rejected—a queer stage in that ever-changing process which is called immortality. If anything is going to break the deadlock perhaps it is this book—the first volume of Scott's Journal, 1825–1826 (Oliver and Boyd, 5s.)—which Mr. J. G. Tait has been at immense pains to edit and revise. As Scott's Journals are the best life of Scott in existence, as they contain Scott in his glory and Scott in his gloom, and gossip about Byron, and the famous comment upon Jane Austen, as in a few passages Scott throws more light upon his genius and its limitations than all his critics in their innumerable volumes, this new version may one of these dark nights bring the two non-combatants to blows.

By way of inducing that desirable encounter, let us take the entry for November 21st, 1825: "Went to the Oil Gas Committee this morning, of which concern I am President or Chairman." Scott, as Lockhart tells us as we can well believe, had a passion for gas. He loved a bright light, and he did not mind a slight smell. As for the expense of those innumerable pipes, in dining-room, drawing-room, corridors and bedrooms, and the men's wages—he swept all that aside in those glorious days when his imagination was at its height. "The state of an illumination was constantly kept up"; and the gas shone upon a brilliant company. Everyone was flocking to Abbotsford—dukes and duchesses, lion hunters and toadies, the famous and the obscure. "Oh dear," Miss Scott exclaimed. "Will this never end, Papa?" And her father replied, "Let them come, the more the merrier." And someone else walked in.

One night a year or two before the diary begins, the stranger was a young artist. Artists were so common at Abbotsford that Scott's dog, Maida, recognised them at sight and got up and left the room. This time it was William Bewick, obscure, penniless, in pursuit of sitters. Naturally he was a good deal dazzled both by the gas and the company. Kind Mrs. Hughes, therefore, the wife of the deaf Dean of St. Paul's, tried to put him at his ease. She told him how she had often soothed her children's quarrels by showing them Bewick's woodcuts. But William Bewick was no relation of Thomas Bewick. One feels that he had heard the remark before and rather resented it, for was he not a painter himself?

He was a painter himself, and an extremely bad one. Did not Haydon say "Bewick, my pupil, has realised my hopes in his picture of Jacob and Rachel?" Did he not add, some years later, when they had quarrelled about money, "Daniel's left foot and leg would have disgraced Bewick before he ran away from my tuition to the shelter of Academical wings"? But we know without Haydon's testimony that Bewick's portraits were intolerable. We know that from his writing. His friends are always painted in a state of violent physical agitation, but mentally they are stock still, stone dead. There is his picture of Hazlitt playing tennis. "He looked more like a savage animal than anything human . . ." He cast off his shirt; he leapt; he darted; when the game was over he rubbed himself against a post, dripping with sweat. But when he spoke, "His ejaculations were interlarded," Bewick says, "with unintentional and unmeaning oaths." They cannot be repeated; they must be imagined; in other words, Hazlitt was dumb. Or take Bewick's account of an evening party in a small room when the Italian poet Foscolo met Wordsworth. They argued. Foscolo "deliberately doubled his fist and held it in Wordsworth's face close to his nose." Then, suddenly, he began whirling round the room, tossing his quizzing glass, rolling his R's, bawling. The ladies "drew in their feet and costumes." Wordsworth sat "opening his mouth and eyes, gasping for breath." At last he spoke. For page after page he spoke; or rather dead phrases coagulated upon his lips, in frozen and lifeless entanglements. Listen for a moment. "Although I appreciate, and I hope can admire sufficiently the beauties of Raphael's transcendent genius . . . yet we must brace the sinews, so to speak, of our comprehension to grapple with the grandeur and sublimity . . . of Michael Angelo . . ." It is enough. We see Bewick's pictures; we realise how intolerable it became to sit any longer under the portrait of Grandpapa flinging out a bare arm from the toga while the horse in the background champs his bit, paws the ground and seems to neigh.

That night at Abbotsford the gas blazed from the three great chandeliers over the dinner-table; and the dinner, "as my friend, Thackeray, would have said, was récherché." Then they went into the drawing-room—a vast apartment with its mirrors, its marble tables, Chantrey's bust, the varnished woodwork and the crimson tasselled curtains pendant from handsome brass rods. They went in and Bewick was dazzled—"The brilliant gaslight, the elegance and taste displayed throughout this beautiful apartment, the costumes of the ladies, with the sparkle and glitter of the tea-table"—the scene, as Bewick describes it, brings back all the worst passages in the Waverley novels. We can see the jewels sparkling, we can smell the gas escaping, we can hear the conversation. There is Lady Scott gossiping with kind Mrs. Hughes; there is Scott himself, prosing and pompous, grumbling about his son Charles and his passion for sport. "But I suppose it will have an end at a given time, like any other hobby of youth." To complete the horror, the German Baron D'este strums on the guitar. He is showing "how in Germany they introduced into guitar performances of martial music the imitation of the beating of drums." Miss Scott—or is she Miss Wardour or another of the vapid and vacant Waverley novel heroines?—hangs over him entranced. Then, suddenly, the whole scene changes. Scott began in a low mournful voice to recite the ballad of Sir Patrick Spens:

> Oh lang lang may their ladies sit
> With their fans in their hands
> Or e'er they see Sir Patrick Spens
> Come sailing to the land.

The guitar stopped; Sir Walter's lips trembled as he came to an end. So it happens, too, in the novels—the lifeless English turns to living Scots.

Bewick came again. Again he joined that extraordinary company, all distinguished either for their genius or for their rank. Again the tiny red beads of light in the chandeliers blossomed at the turn of a screw into "a gush of splendour worthy of the palace of Aladdin." And there they all were, those gas-lit celebrities, dashed in with the usual dabs of bright oily paint: Lord Minto in plain black, wearing a most primitive tie; Lord Minto's chaplain, with his saturnine expression and his hair combed and cut as if by the edge of a barber's basin; Lord Minto's servant, so enthralled by Scott's stories that he forgot to change the plates; Sir John Malcom wearing his star and ribbon; and little Johnny Lockhart gazing at the star. "You must try and get hold of one," said Sir Walter, upon which Lockhart smiled, ". . . the only time I have observed him to relieve his fixed features from that inpenetrable reserve, etc., etc." And again they went into that beautiful apartment, and Sir John announced that he was about to tell his famous Persian story. Everybody must be summoned. Summoned they were.

From all quarters of that teeming and hospitable house guests came flocking. "One young lady, I remember, was brought from her sick-bed wrapt in blankets and laid on the sofa." The story began; the story went on. So long was it that it had to be cut into "miles." At the end of one Sir John stopped and asked "Shall I go on?" "Do go on,

do go on Sir John," Lady Scott entreated, and on he went, mile after mile, until—from where?—there appeared Monsieur Alexandre, the French ventriloquist, who at once began to imitate the planing of a French polished dinner-table. "The attitude, the action, the noise, the screeches and hitches at knots, throwing off the shavings with his left hand, were all so perfect that Lady Scott, in alarm, screamed "Oh! my dining-room table, you are spoiling my dining-room table! It will never be got bright again!" And Sir Walter had to reassure her. "It is only imitation, my dear . . . it is only make believe . . . he will not hurt the table." And the screeching began again, and Lady Scott screamed again, and on it went, the screeching and the screaming, until the sweat poured from the ventriloquist's forehead, and it was time for bed.

Scott took Bewick to his room; on the way he stopped; he spoke. His words were simple—oddly simple, and yet after all that gas and glitter they seem to come from the living lips of an ordinary human being. The muscles are relaxed; the toga slips off him. "You, I suppose, would be of the stock of Sir Robert Bewick?" That was all, but it was enough—enough to make Bewick feel that the great man, for all his greatness, had noted his discomfiture when Mrs. Hughes was so tactful and wished to give him his chance. He took it. "I," he exclaimed, "am of a very ancient family, the Bewicks of Annan, who lost their estates . . . ." Out it all came; on it all went. Then Scott opened the bedroom door, and showed him the gas—how you can turn it up, how you can turn it down. And, expressing the hope that his guest would be comfortable—if not he was to ring the bell—Scott left him. But Bewick could not sleep. He tossed and tumbled. He thought, as the people in his pictures must have thought, about magicians' cells, alchemists' spells, lions' lairs, the pallet of poverty and the downy couch of luxury. Then, remembering the great man and his goodness, he burst into tears, prayed, and fell asleep.

We, however, can follow Scott to his room. By the light of his journals, the natural and fitful light of happiness and sorrow, we can see him after the party was over, when poor Charlotte chattered no more, and Maida had gone where, let us hope, artists no longer paint the favourite dogs of celebrated men. But after a party is over some saying, some figure often remains in the mind. Now it is the ventriloquist, Monsieur Alexandre. Was Scott himself, we ask, glancing at the long line of the Waverley novels, merely the greatest of all the ventriloquist novelists, of all who imitate human speech without hurting the dining-room table—it is all make-believe, my dear, it is all imitation? Or was he the last of the playwright novelists, who, when the pressure of emotion is strong enough behind them can leap the bounds of prose and make real thoughts and real emotions issue in real words from living lips? So many playwrights did; but of novelists who—except Sir Walter and, perhaps, Dickens? To write as they did, to keep so hospitable and teeming a house, where earls and artists, ventriloquists and barons, dogs and young ladies speak each in character, must not one be as they were, half-ventriloquist, half-poet? And is it not the combination in the Waverley novels of gas and daylight, ventriloquy and truth that separates the two parties, and might they not, using the journals as stepping-stones, with a glance at these crude illustrations from the brush of William Bewick, break the deadlock and come to blows? VIRGINIA WOOLF

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NEW NOVELS

Mr. Skeffington. By ELIZABETH. *Heinemann.* 9*s.*
Now, Gentlemen, Please. By HERBERT FERNÉE. *Faber.* 8*s.* 3*d.*
The Dead Stay Dumb. By JAMES HADLEY CHASE. *Jarrolds.* 7*s.* 6*d.*
Man Without Uniform. By WILLY CORSARI. *Hutchinson.* 9*s.* 6*d.*
Citizen of Westminster. By JOAN MORGAN. *Chapman and Hall.* 8*s.* 3*d.*

One of the surest signs of our steady decline from the Golden and Silver ages to the era of ersatz-tin is the remarkable fashion in which qualitative adjectives tend to decrease in strength and respectability. Cunning, for example, formerly the praiseworthy talent of the skilled craftsman, has now sunk to signify the mean skill of the petty trickster; the Enthusiastic are no longer idealists preaching salvation with burning braziers on their heads, but merely persons who are easily stirred by any passing whim; to-day, a monument is Awful only when it is in strikingly bad taste. In the language of literary criticism adjectives are losing their significance almost before our eyes. "Competent" has, in some quarters, become practically a disparagement, and "sensitive" is used to suggest a lack of vigour. "Powerful" is reserved for novels weighing more than 1½ lbs., and "provocative" is a popular code-word for the mildly obscene. Although old adjectives thus lose their meaning, new words are slow to replace them, and fairly to review certain kinds of writing would require a perpetual redefinition of critical terms.

Mr. Skeffington is sentimental in the true sense of the word. Fanny, a fine lady of breeding so perfect that culture is quite unnecessary, and taste so exquisite that none of her numerous *affaires* have ever degenerated into passions, wakes after twenty years of graceful self-indulgence to the dreadful realisation that she has grown old, and that her once-famous beauty has decayed from a miracle into a slightly grotesque phenomenon. Still worse, the memory of the dim Mr. Skeffington, her long-forgotten wealthy husband whose irresistible weakness for his typists had given her the divorce that had made her delightful freedom possible, begins to intrude on her complaisance in the most unwelcome fashion, and reminds her that when in youth she rid herself of a tiresome encumbrance, she had also renounced a secure affection in her old age. To prove to herself that she is still attractive, she seeks out her past lovers, but finds that they have all, in their own ways, found a security to grow old in, and that she has become for them merely a disturbing spectre from a barely remembered past. In spite of the plot thus crudely outlined, *Mr. Skeffington* is not—as was, for instance, *Carnet de Bal*—an essay in nostalgic sentimentality. Elizabeth has a keen observation for her own, admittedly limited, world, and a quick, often astringent sense of

humour. She can depict shallow people without being either boring or openly satirical; and can show the silliness of a county wife or the self-obsessions of Fanny with wit, pathos and conviction. She has a pleasing gift for the near epigram ("Women didn't grow less tiresome with age, but more tiresome. Their defects of body and mind, like the stones of a badly made road, work gradually through to the surface"), and can write with a polish that gives a literary turn to the most ordinary of sentences. It is difficult to convey in a review the subtle and elusive charm of *Mr. Skeffington*. A distinguished critic suggests "Edwardian" as the book's indicative epithet, and it does convey Elizabeth's leisured sophistication, as well as implying the blind over-detachment of her aristocratic characters. Rather rudely, one might describe Fanny as an isolated, self-analytical Mrs. Minniver, but one so indubitably out of the top layer of the very topmost drawer that even Mr. Forster would forbear to sneer. *Mr. Skeffington* is sentimental: that is, it is a novel of feeling, as distinct from reason or physical emotion. It is a book with a conventional moral, it suspects rather than explores psychological deeps, and will not, one imagines, appeal to the younger students of the Serious Novel. It is, however, a very careful and clever piece of work, and reminds us that novel-writing can still be one of the fine arts.

Surprisingly few novelists have taken licensed victuallers for their heroes, though such a choice has much to recommend it. A public house provides all the unities that Aristotle could desire, it permits a natural introduction of the most improbable and unrelated characters, while the etymological freak that has indissolubly united publicans with sinners might be utilised to tempt a considerable section of the public. Mr. Fernée has realised the possibilities; and *Now, Gentlemen, Please*, the autobiographical reflections of Phyllis, a fluent barmaid, has many of the qualities possessed by minor best-sellers. Phyllis moves in that curious, intermediate world where money floats independently of possessions and jolly fellows of no obvious wealth or occupation are not only able and willing to spend pounds in an evening on girls they pick up in shoddy saloon bars, but are, with a little encouragement, quite easily pushed into proposals of marriage, or at least of regularised and very expensive sin. Mr. Fernée is clearly at home in this peculiar capitalist backwater, and Phyllis's chirpy comments on her social and sexual problems are characteristically amusing. Unhappily, the author has pushed realism too far, and his barmaid is so undeviatingly typical that her rambling, true-to-life introspections make her a repetitive bore. The author apparently realised that both Phyllis and her surroundings are presented so realistically that it is impossible long to disguise their inherent dullness without the introduction of a little fantasy. Accordingly, he abandons in the second half of the novel the careful reportage of the first, and leaps wildly into a whirl of drug-traffickers, white-slavers, inscrutable Chinese servants, horrible murders and all the dismal paraphernalia of ready-made excitement. Admittedly, he makes quite good use of this third-rate bag of tricks, but he fails to carry off the impossible, and once more proves the vanity of faithfully depicting fundamentally uninteresting personalities. *Now, Gentlemen, Please* is considerably better than most essays in urban picaresque, and Mr. Fernée writes with a spirit worthy of a better subject. Phyllis is a lively character, and her behaviour in the earlier part of the book is wholly and delightfully credible. That she soon becomes as boring in fiction as she undoubtedly would be in fact, is less a tribute to her author's literary skill than a reproach to his critical abilities. But for a new novelist Mr. Fernée shows surprising craftsmanship, and I shall look forward to seeing his second book.

After the usual popular fiction, Mr. Chase is like a welcome puff of fetid air on a windy heath. *The Dead Stay Dumb* is his second novel and shows that he has already succeeded where many wise guys have failed, and muscled in to the top of his chosen literary racket. His speciality is psychotic and unmitigated toughness, with sadism at the helm, entrails twined round the prow, and blood running in the scuppers. The present book has less slaughter than its predecessor (*No Orchids For Miss Blandish* chronicled twenty-two deaths, as well as many rapes and tortures), but contains descriptive passages that are both mannered and picturesque:

> Dillon raked him with his cold eyes. "There was one bright boy who talked like that an' changed his mind. He walked down a street one night with his guts hanging out down to his knees. Someone gutted him with a knife. Hell! You ought to have seen that guy. He tried to stuff his guts back, but just touching them with his hands made him so sick he let 'em hang in the end."

Mr. Chase has the spirit of a minor Elizabethan, and might well have collaborated with Tourneur. His philosophy—all men are lousy, and you can give anyone the works except Nemesis—would have suited the period, while much of his work could go into blank verse practically unaltered:

> Dillon: Two punks of Ernie's, gunning after you,
> Have come, I figger, to a heap of grief,
> And with my tommy-gun are quite rubbed out.
> Big Shot: Yeah? Quite, quite stiff?
> Dillon: A pork chop's not so stiff as them two punks,
> A spongy mess sags where their heads have been.
> Big Shot: O noble guy! We gonna get together!

The appeal of Mr. Chase is that he merges the flavours of Hemingway, Huysmans and some of the nastier sagas into a mixture at once tough, epic, and thoroughly decadent. And who could ask for more than that?

Man Without Uniform and *Citizen of Westminster* are type novels with some merits as light reading, but no individuality. Mr. Cosari's book is very unhappy, and discusses whether a doctor should Tell, Kill or even Take the Day Off; and whether a wife is entitled to a separation because her husband is perpetually engaged in painting rats with tar. The medical background is outlined in some detail, and would probably entertain the less nervous sort of hypochondriac. *Citizen of Westminster* is about a block of luxury flats in which almost every resident, including a South African cricketer and a young woman whose publisher lover has her poems published on hand-made paper at the firm's expense, is emotionally entangled with someone in another part of the vast building. The various stories are spirited enough, but the only memorable feature of the book is the fact that twenty-four out of the twenty-nine chapters end suddenly and abruptly with four dots . . . .

JOHN MAIR

WAYS OF THOUGHT IN ANCIENT CHINA

Three Ways of Thought in Ancient China. By ARTHUR WALEY. *Allen and Unwin.* 7s. 6d.

If any English writer could explain the East to the West, it would be Mr. Arthur Waley—his images are so felicitous, his style is so lucid: but one feels sometimes that the task is beyond a writer's power. The "mysterious Orient" may be a sphinx without a secret: yet the fact remains that every work dealing with Eastern philosophy, Eastern literature, Eastern aestheticism leaves one's mind at the end of the volume a little befogged. One's understanding reaches a certain distance: and there it breaks down. "I have often thought (wrote De Quincey) that if I were compelled . . . to live in China . . . I should go mad . . . . The mere antiquity of Asiatic things . . . is so impressive, that to me the vast age of the race and name overpowers the sense of youth in the individual. A young Chinese seems to me an antediluvian man renewed." Similarly, while reading Mr. Waley's latest book, *Three Ways of Thought in Ancient China*, one is impressed alike by the profundity of the Chinese intellect and by its odd touches of childishness, by its combination of extreme subtlety and puzzling obliquity. One can be quite sure of nothing among these thinkers. Now they are engaged in endless quibbling debate centred round some minor point of moral etiquette: now dazzling common sense flashes out from a wilderness of anecdotage. They are solemn and babyish and poetic and shrewd. There are moments when Mencius and Chuang Tzu appear fantastically remote from our modern interests, and there are times when they throw a brilliant light on contemporary problems. . . . Then one remembers that they were the products of Asia's infancy—that, beside them, the author of *Beowulf* was an historical *parvenu*—that their voices travel to us from the third century before Christ!

Three systems are considered in the present survey. With that of the Taoists—far the most interesting to a Western mind—we have already been familiarised by Mr. Waley's previous study, *The Way and Its Power*, a detailed examination of the *Tao Tê Ching*. Taoism, like many schools of Eastern philosophy, is hardly a philosophical system in the Western sense; for it disdains argument and exposition in favour of allusion and poetic suggestion and must be felt by the student rather than comprehended. Nor did Taoist sages aspire to the concrete. Naive as in some respects their teaching was, in others it was sophisticated to the point of cynicism; and, while on the one hand it has

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affinities with primitive ritual and includes rationalisations of early religious beliefs, elsewhere it seems more appropriate to an age of decline, world-weary, hyper-civilised, steeped in experience, than to a people whose adult history had just begun and who had before them a further two thousand years of social and intellectual evolution.

Above all, Taoism instils the virtues of non-resistance. As the drunkard who tumbles from his carriage is never killed, however fast he may be driving, because he is limp and passive when he falls (. . . " his soul is intact . . . neither death nor life, astonishment nor fear can enter into his breast . . . he does not stiffen with fright. If such integrity of the spirit can be got from wine, how much greater must be the integrity that is got from Heaven ? ")—so the wise and good man does not struggle with circumstances but lets life flow over him and flow around him. He prevails because he does not attempt to dominate. Death and the common human calamities he accepts in a mood " which is one not merely of resignation nor even of acquiescence, but a lyrical, almost ecstatic acceptance." Thus, when Chuang Tzu's wife died, the master astonished his disciple Hui Tzu by sitting " with an inverted bowl on his knees, drumming upon it and singing a song." Hui Tzu remonstrated with him ; but Chuang Tzu replied that, although he had loved his wife devotedly and had regretted her loss bitterly, " soon, pondering on what had happened, I told myself that in death no strange new fate befalls us. In the beginning we lack not life only, but form. Not form only, but spirit. We are blended in the one great featureless indistinguishable mass. Then a time came when the mass evolved spirit, spirit evolved form, form evolved life. And now life in its turn has evolved death. . . . If some one is tired . . . we do not pursue him with shouting and bawling. She whom I have lost has lain down to sleep for a while in the great Inner Room. To break in upon her rest with the noise of lamentation would but show that I knew nothing of nature's Sovereign Law. That is why I have ceased to mourn." Acquiescence is the measure of the sage's strength ; and " for the Wise Man (we read) life is conformity to the motions of Heaven, death is but part of the common law of change. At rest, he shares the secret powers of Yin ; at work, he shares the rocking of the waves of Yang. He neither invites prosperity nor courts disaster. Only when invited does he respond, only when pushed does he move, only as a last resort will he rise. He casts away all knowledge and artifice. . . . Therefore Heaven visits him with no calamity, the things of the world do not lay their trammels upon him, no living man blames him, no ghost attacks him. His life is like the drifting of a boat, his death is like a lying down to rest. He has no anxieties, lays no plans."

If Chuang Tzu was an anarchist in his attitude towards the personal life—holding, with the Buddhists, that " he who needs others is for ever shackled ; he who is needed by others is for ever sad "—he was equally intolerant of the restrictions of a man-made morality. Here and there, he reminds one of Blake in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. " Nothing is worse for the soul (observed the Taoist) than struggling not to give play to feelings that it cannot control. This is called the Double Injury. . ." " Sooner murder an infant in its cradle (wrote William Blake) than nurse unacted desires." When Confucius, that remarkably prosy person, arrived at the sage's retreat with glib talk of " goodness " and " duty " which he defined as having a heart without guile and loving all men without partiality, his pretensions were quickly exploded by the Taoist cynic.

" ' Hum,' said Lao Tzu, ' the second saying sounds to me dangerous. To speak of " loving all men " is a foolish exaggeration, and to make up one's mind to be impartial is in itself a kind of partiality. If you indeed want the men of the world not to lose the qualities that are natural to them, you had best study how it is that Heaven and Earth maintain their eternal course, that the sun and the moon maintain their light, the stars their serried ranks . . ., the trees and shrubs their station. Thus you too shall learn to guide your steps by Inward Power, to follow the course that the Way of Nature sets ; and soon you will reach a goal where you will no longer need to go round laboriously advertising goodness and duty, like a town-crier with his drum, seeking for news of a lost child. No, sir ! What you are doing is to disjoint men's natures ! ' "

From Taoism, both in China and, later, in Japan, sprang important schools of literature, painting, architecture, even garden-planning, pottery-making and swordsmanship. But a workaday practical philosophy it could never become ; whereas both Confucianism and the system of the Realists were distinguished by their largely prosaic character. The Taoists gazed inward : they looked outward. Government by goodness was the Confucians' aim ; but their conception of goodness was, at the best of times, somewhat formal and inelastic ; and Mencius laid it down that " only people of the upper classes could maintain fixed principles of right and wrong." Unfortunately, the Righteous Despot for whom Mencius sought failed as signally to materialise as Plato's Philosopher King ; and the Realists in the end carried the day. With their ruthlessness, their unscrupulous use of propaganda, their hatred and distrust of the individual, the Realists—or, as they have hitherto been called, the School of Law—bore a close resemblance to modern totalitarians ; and the Realist doctrine, unlike Taoism and Confucianism, was " not merely adopted by the ruler of a great State, but on being put into action was found to do everything that was expected of it." The Realist Ch'in State triumphed over its neighbours and rivals, till it had established an hegemony that included the whole of China, founding an imperial dynasty which lasted for fifteen years. Mr. Waley does not labour the contemporary parallel ; but throughout his work the comparison is always implicit. The book is full of memorable phrases and amusing aphorisms. It reveals a world at once close to us and very far away. PETER QUENNELL

EDWARDIAN MARTYRS

Portrait of a Young Man. By FRANKLIN LUSHINGTON. *Faber*. 8*s*. 6*d*.

Was it Yesterday ? By DAVID HORNER. *Macmillan*. 8*s*. 6*d*.

Enter a Child. By DORMER CRESTON. *Macmillan*. 7*s*. 6*d*.

Children are the martyrs of every period. They have to live the theories of their parents, they have to follow strictly a conduct of life which their elders may subscribe to but generally manage to evade. In consequence, autobiographies of childhood, once one has discounted that moan about injustice which affects most of our memories, are excellent social history. They catch the unofficial atmosphere of a generation, what may be called the by-products of its beliefs and activities.

All of these books recall Edwardian childhoods in the comfortable classes, and they do their job very well. Colonel Lushington's gravity, Mr. Horner's diligent and amusing anatomy of a South Coast resort and Miss Creston's pernickety sensibility, all catch an essential residue of the time. What is its quality ? Although these are extremely readable and amusing books, the impression remains that the Edwardian children were martyrs to dullness and boredom. Shaw might be assailing the gentleman and the worship of convention, Wells might be firing his catapult at plutocracy and gentility, its seedy child ; but that was for the elders and only the advanced among them. The child was encumbered with these notions. Religion, at least, had given a drama to the lives of the Victorian children ; the Edwardians had reduced it to a routine, the routine of a spiritual and material comfort.

With their horses, their empty roads, their smiling servants, their mapped lives, marred only by occasional financial indigestion —poor brother So-and-So having to give up his hounds because of the iniquitous income tax—Colonel Lushington's comfortable Edwardian minority of ten or twenty thousand people lived in the last full tedium of English happiness. They had discovered the secret of that : a congenial and pleasantly circumscribed monotony. They believed obdurately in circumscription, circumspection and behaviour. One is aware in all the Edwardian autobiographies of this class of an ambient dullness, a dullness which sprang from that long process of frustration which goes to the making of ladies and gentlemen. One is amazed, after reading such narratives as Colonel Lushington's, which describes a conventional huntin', shootin', Public School and Army career of the unextravagant kind, that any individuality remained or that individualism could have been a contemporary god. Perhaps the answer is that discipline—and the upper classes up to 1914 chastened themselves pretty thoroughly for their comforts—produces individualists by reaction, where freedom creates the new mass man. Left to ourselves, we all become the same.

Colonel Lushington's book is light, grave and without exaggerations of emotion. Motherless, and soon after fatherless, he grew up un-selfconfident and afraid in a society which was both sedate and tough. Most of his decisions were made from fear of fear. He went through the upper-class mill shivering beside his father on the shooting parties, beaten up nightly at school until, licked into shape, he too joined the horseplay. Great fun the young

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gentlemen had throwing the gamekeeper into the river! In Ireland he had some fine hunting, which is beautifully described; in England, he was lectured by his relations on drink when he was in love, on the evils of horse-racing when he had a hang-over, and on women when he was worried about horses. The next misunderstanding was the retreat from Mons. These reticent Edwardians, carefully avoiding all socially unsuitable subjects, from homosexuality onwards, were spiritually unprepared for the most unsuitable subject of all. This is an admirable portrait, self-deprecatory but not self-pitying, faithful to the exquisite monotone of past days and very worthy of a place beside Siegfried Sassoon's classic of the period.

Mr. David Horner goes back to the visits he paid every year when he was a boy to a famous seaside town on the South Coast. His book is also a grave and ironical anatomy of gentility and of those peculiar atmospheres, half-blowsy and half-refined, which managed to dwell side by side in the English seaside resorts. There were the residents, queer birds in a gilded cage; and there were the visitors, that outer horror which accounted for the town's existence. Mr. Horner's cousins, Fanny and Mary, were belligerently resident. Guzzling buttered toast at all hours in their house on "the Terrace," they bickered about religion, invented small scandals and devoted themselves to the newspaper, botany, gardening and meteorological observation. The last is a good point. Artiness and interior decoration, Mr. Horner points out, have succeeded that late Victorian passion for playing at science. The microscope, the rain-gauge, the barometer, the hygrometer—all recordings carefully noted—competed in the garden with an attempt to reproduce the Alps, the Tropics and the grots of romantic poetry. The cousins fought over free thought, protection and the Bishop and Cousin Fanny always wore black in Lent; for diversion there was the "mad" Miss Floud who wrote about Shakespeare, and the "unfortunate" Miss Hackbridge who provided conversation for weeks by absent-mindedly taking her hot-water bottle down the street *in its red flannel coat*. Mr. Horner examines Frittlesea very acutely and sympathetically, and then contrasts it with a French resort over the Channel. He is by no means a merely picturesque writer, but, like Colonel Lushington, has built up a world as it slowly unfolds to the eyes of a growing boy, with most pleasing sobriety and judgment. He has, as his book on France showed a year or two back, an uncommon gift for the inner atmosphere of places.

Miss Creston is yet another Edwardian, at first the conventional misunderstood child; but, when timidity is conquered, gives an entertaining picture of her times. Discipline and manners once more; but the human breaks through in such delightful pieces as the account of the Uncles playing with railway trains in a huge country house or the farcical attempt of the tutor to photograph a house party. This, particularly, is good. Elsewhere, one notes how long the shadow of Victorianism was, how long it takes for a century to die. There is, indeed, no such thing as period, for people manage very easily to live two or three generations behind their times. Strictness has made Miss Creston a shade insistent in her sensibility, but when she turns from herself to the society around her she is good.

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A WORKER-SCHOLAR

Trials of British Freedom. By T. A. JACKSON. *Lawrence and Wishart.* 5s.

The most interesting thing about this book is the personality of its author. "Tommy" Jackson is one of the rare English specimens of a common Continental type—the revolutionary worker-scholar. In person and in lineage, he is a representative of a thousand erudite and obstinate cobblers and weavers who preserved freedom of thought and real knowledge when their assumed defenders neglected them. There can be few who have followed Left-wing politics for the last thirty years who have not come into contact with, and respected, this strange figure, with its fearsome appearance, deriving something from Lewis Carroll's Other Professor and something from Grub Street, and its equally sensational manners, deriving partly from Karl Marx but rather more from Dr. Johnson.

He has the faults of his type as well as its virtues. On occasion one suspects him of collecting facts as a magpie collects stones, more because they are hard, sharp and brightly coloured than for any apparent utility. He tends to replace argument (when contradicted on a matter of history) by a tornado of recondite and allusive abuse. On the other hand, he has spent years in reading, from mere affection for his subject, the history of the struggle of the British workers for freedom, and is able to recount what he has read in the manner which non-literary workers require. He shows no trace of sectarianism, and has a wide good sense which sees that Wilkes and Bradlaugh are as much in the true succession as Marx and Lenin.

This book consists mostly of articles reprinted from the old *Sunday Worker*. It does not consist of "trials"—that word in the title is apparently to be interpreted as in *The Trials and Misfortunes of Maria Monk*. It consists of short and vivid accounts of arbitrarily selected periods of British history, of which the most important are Wilkes, the Painites, and the Chartists. Among the more interesting of the minor chapters is one on the Communist trial of 1925, in which the late Mr. Justice Rigby Swift had the Eldon-like impudence to offer to refrain from sentencing the defendants if they would tear up their membership cards.

The best section of all is the concluding portion of the Prologue, which restates in clear and admirable language what I believe to be the only true interpretation of modern British history. It is one that cannot be reconciled with pacts with Nazism, and for that reason is incompatible with the present line of the Communist International. But so long as the parties contain thinkers so honourable and clairvoyant as Tommy Jackson there is hope that they will return to the fight that they have abandoned. A man who is in the tradition of Carlile and Bradlaugh, and who knows enough history to appreciate how great a compliment that phrase is, is certain to perceive the truth in time, and having perceived it to follow it.

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The Danger of Being a Gentleman. By H. J. LASKI. *Allen and Unwin.* 7s. 6d.

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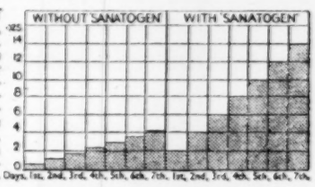

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order, these things are failing because we cling to old forms at a time when History is rushing. Of the failure of the Gentleman as a class, for instance, Professor Laski writes with real understanding just because he appreciates his merits in the past.

> There are great qualities in the English gentleman which must not be overlooked. He believes with ardour in playing the game with those of his own status. He has the habit of graceful command. . . . He is invariably courageous and, to women of his own class, chivalrous and deferential. He rarely pursues his vices and he has a horror of ostentatious virtue. . . . He rarely pushes a claim too far and he is too intellectually humble to take long-term views. If he grumbles much, at least he can laugh at himself and no one is so apt to extricate himself skilfully from a dangerous situation. He enjoys the exercise of power; and since he rarely knows how to make money, it is still more rare for him to be corrupted by it.

If this appraisal is ironic, it is also sincere; it is by no means certain, Professor Laski adds, that for all the Gentleman's faults we shall replace him by a more admirable type. But replaced he must be, simply because his virtues are now as outmoded as his faults. "He has lost the basis of his self-esteem because he has no longer either a purpose to maintain or that conviction of its necessity which must give it life."

So, too, the conception of sovereign national states is too narrow and exclusive for a world in which Buenos Aires has become neighbour to London. "Just as we spent the nineteenth century in thinking nationally so we must spend the twentieth . . . in building as best we may the organs of that international community every year of delay in whose coming brings us so much the nearer to disaster." That sentence written in 1932 can only be read to-day with another kind of irony, but the essay on Nationalism and the Future of Civilisation from which it is taken still stands, and Federal Unionists might well consider its implications. You cannot federate lambs and tigers even on the basis of apparently common economic interests; the tiger remains a tiger even at the drinking pool. And each nation at present has its war of tigers and lambs within its national boundaries. The price to be paid for a federation of any kind is "the replacement of privilege by equality in social relations."

The clarity and the fairness with which Professor Laski presents his arguments are a model of political writing; the intellectual honesty and lucidity with which he approaches his subjects are a model of political thinking. As one reads this book, one cannot help contrasting what might have been with what is. If the problems of the inter-war years had been faced with only half of the sanity with which they are here treated, we should hardly be in the predicament in which we now find ourselves.

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BOOKS TO COME

A few publishers have not acquiesced in the uniform price increase system for novels which was recommended for adoption by the Publishers' Association. Messrs. Constable, for instance, take the view that such a method is unliterary and unscientific—that quality rather than quantity should be the basis for determining price. Thus whilst they propose to publish a new detective story at the usual price of 7s. 6d. they are shortly issuing a first novel which, they consider, displays unusual merit—*They Come and They Go* by Venetia Savile—at 8s. 6d. The "novel," as such, is in their opinion much too wide a conception to be used as a standard for determining price. Allen and Unwin is another firm which is not for the present automatically increasing its prices.

Constable announces for February 6th a *Handbook of the War* compiled by the Time-Life-Fortune Group in America and the American Foreign Policy Association which provides an impartial factual background of the war—its causes, geography, and nature and the comparative equipment and resources of the opposing forces. It is fully illustrated with maps and pictorial charts showing man-power, first air-line strength, ships, etc. On the same day, this firm publishes Mr. George Bullock's *Marie Corelli: The Life and Death of a Best-Seller*, already announced in this column.

Hutchinsons will be the publishers early in February of the English edition of the French Yellow Book which consists of the French documents on events directly leading to the war, including the reports by M. Coulondre and M. Francois-Poncet.

A new book by William Gerhardi—*The Romanovs*—comes from Rich and Cowan on January 26th. It is a historical biography of the whole dynasty and also, since it includes a survey of the earlier dynasty of the Ruriks, a history of Russia and her European adventures. The book is illustrated and is being published at 30s. On the same day, Rich and Cowan publish George Lansbury's *This Way To Peace*.

Lawrence and Wishart announce for January 30th *Two Systems* by E. Varga, one of Russia's leading economists and author of *The General Crisis of Capitalism*. It is a comparative study of capitalists and socialist economy.

The Two Moralities by A. D. Lindsay, Master of Balliol, to be published by Eyre and Spottiswoode on January 31st, is the first volume of a *New Series of Lent Books* directed by the Archbishop of York. Dr. Lindsay discusses the apparent conflict between Christian principle and the limitations of social morality and examines the place of the Church in the modern community. This firm publishes on the same day *The Moral Issues of the War* by the Very Rev. W. R. Matthews, Dean of St. Paul's—an inquiry into the moral and religious justifications of our position in the war.

Dent's spring publishing season opens on February 1st with the publication of a new novel by Gerald Bullett—*A Man of Forty*—and a serious study of *American Jazz Music* by Wilder Hopson.

Sherard Vines, author of the anthology *Whips and Scorpions*, has written a satirical novel of middle-class life in the Midlands, *Green to Amber*, which will be published by Cape on February 2nd. Cape also announces a revised edition with new material of John Cowper Powys' *The Meaning of Culture*.

A nephew of Arnold Bennett, George Wolfenden, has a novel, *The Undefeated*, coming from Hurst and Blackett early in February, part of whose scene is laid in the Potteries. This firm is issuing two novels by Georges Simenon, who is gaining great popularity in this country, in its *Toucan Pocket Novels* series. They are *Introducing Inspector Maigret* and *Inspector Maigret Investigates*.

Last year, Mr. Leonardo Blake catered for a new demand with his prophetic utterances *Hitler's Last Year of Power*. He has now written a successor, *The Last Year of War—And After*, which is due from Dakers on January 29th. After a crescendo of violence in February, the war, he tells us, is to end in early summer.

MARIE SCOTT-JAMES

Week-end Competitions

No. 520

Set by R. H. S. Crossman

This general knowledge paper has been composed from the papers sent in as answers to competition No. 515. The usual prizes are offered for the most correct solutions.

1. What is the difference between the actions of a horse and

BARCLAYS BANK

LIMITED.

EDWIN FISHER, Chairman.
WILLIAM MACNAMARA GOODENOUGH, Deputy Chairman
HUGH EXTON SEEBOHM, Vice-Chairman.
General Managers: A. W. TUKE, W. O. STEVENSON, N. S. JONES.

Statement of Accounts.

31st December, 1939.

	£	£
LIABILITIES.		
Current, Deposit and other Accounts, including Reserve for Taxation and Contingencies and Balance of Profit and Loss	444,446,530	
Balances in account with Subsidiary Banks	16,929,918	
		461,376,448
Acceptances and Endorsements, etc., for account of Customers		15,594,145
Paid-up Capital		15,858,217
Reserve Fund		10,750,000
ASSETS.		
Cash in hand and with the Bank of England		58,177,086
Balances with other British Banks and Cheques in course of collection		19,161,492
Money at Call and Short Notice		28,713,245
Bills Discounted		67,585,175
Investments		98,840,829
Investments in Subsidiary Banks (at cost, *less* amounts written off) :—		
The British Linen Bank—**£1,241,044 12s. 6d.** Stock		3,723,134
The Union Bank of Manchester Limited—**300,000** Shares of **£5** each, **£2 10s.** paid		750,000
Other Banks—(including fully paid Shares and **500,000** "B" Shares of **£5** each, **£1** per Share paid up, in Barclays Bank (Dominion, Colonial and Overseas) and **1,000,000** Shares of **£1** each, **5s.** per Share paid up, in Barclays Bank (France) Limited)		2,546,799
Advances :—Customers and other Accounts	199,742,690	
Balances in account with Subsidiary Banks	1,104,418	
		200,847,108
Liability of Customers for Acceptances and Endorsements, etc.		15,594,145
Bank Premises and Adjoining Properties (at cost, *less* amounts written off)		7,639,797

HEAD OFFICE:

54, Lombard Street, London, E.C.3.

London Amusements

OPERA & BALLET

SADLER'S WELLS, Rosebery Ave., E.C.1.
2d. bus fr. Piccadilly. (Ter. 1672.) 9d. to 7s. 6d. Next Week:
WED., at 7, DIE FLEDERMAUS (Jubilee Perf.).
THURS., at 7, OTELLO.
SAT., at 2.30, LA BOHEME.
SAT., at 7, MADAM BUTTERFLY.

ARTS THEATRE, CAMBRIDGE
Monday–Saturday. January 29th–February 3rd.
Nightly at 7.30. Matinees Tues., Thurs., & Sat. at 2.30.
THE VIC-WELLS BALLET
All seats bookable: 7s. 6d., 5s., 3s. 6d., 2s. 6d.
Box Office 10 a.m.–8 p.m. (Cambridge 2000.)

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COMEDY. (Whi. 2578.)
TWICE NIGHTLY at 6.45 & 9.15 p.m.
THE BARE IDEA.
A Farcical Comedy. By Gordon Sherry.

PHOENIX. Tem. 8611. EVENINGS at 7.30.
WED., THURS., SAT., 2.30. Final perf. Jan 27
JUDGMENT DAY
London's Greatest Thrill. 1/6 to 8/6

PICCADILLY. (Ger. 4506.) 7.45. Wd., Th., S., 2.30
SYBIL THORNDIKE, EMLYN WILLIAMS.
THE CORN IS GREEN
A COMEDY BY EMLYN WILLIAMS.

STRAND. (Tem. 2660.) Evgs., 8.40. Th. & Sat., 2.30.
ROBERTSON HARE. ALFRED DRAYTON in
SPOTTED DICK
A new farce by BEN TRAVERS.
"YOU WILL LAUGH AND LAUGH AND LAUGH."

TORCH. (Slo. 9966.) Nightly, ex. Mon., at 8.0.
UNTIL SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4th.
KILLYCREGGS IN TWILIGHT
by LENNOX ROBINSON.
Produced by W. G. FAY.
Members (1s. p.a.) only. Prices 5s. 9d., 3s. 6d., 1s. 9d.

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A Show to send you home singing.
Members only. 1/6, 2/6, 3/6. (Sub. 1/- p.a. Share 1/-.)

VICTORIA PALACE. Vic. 1317. 3rd YEAR.
TWICE NIGHTLY, 5.45 and 8.0.
LUPINO LANE in
ME AND MY GIRL
with TEDDIE ST. DENIS

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DESIRE UNDER THE ELMS

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ACADEMY Cinema, 165 Oxford St. Ger. 2981
SACHA GUITRY
in his amusing historical diversion
"REMONTONS LES CHAMPS ELYSEES." (A)
Magnificent Spectacle and Sparkling Wit.

GAUMONT, Haymarket. 'Phone: Whi. 6655.
LESLIE HOWARD in
ESCAPE TO HAPPINESS (U);
introducing INGRID BERGMAN
Weekdays: 1.25, 4.5, 6.40, 9.30. Sunday: 7, 9.40.
Also *Charlie Chan at Treasure Island* a *G-B. News.*

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GREEK RESTAURANT. The White Tower, 1 Percy Street, Tottenham Court Road. Museum 2187. For Greek and Near Eastern food and wines at their best. Shashliks, Stuffed Vine-leaves, Raki, Retsina wine, etc. Business as usual. Open on Sundays.

THERE service crowns your table, Inspiriting, urbane. Cooking most masterly rules in Maiden Lane. RULES, Maiden Lane, Covent Garden (licensed till midnight). Estd. 1780.

A.R.P. yourself at The Book Wine Restaurant facing British Museum, where you can also read "The New Statesman" and take out a subscription. MUS. 6428.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS
Rates and all information on page 119

FALSE TEETH
and false economy

Artificial teeth can only effectively replace natural ones as long as they fit absolutely perfectly. To persist in wearing a loose denture which causes discomfort and embarrassment is false economy because the trouble can so easily be put right. KOLYNOS DENTURE FIXATIVE, *for making false teeth fit firmly*, will hold it securely in position for many hours, ensuring comfort, confidence and proper mastication. Recommended by Dentists. Handy sprinkler tin 1/3d., large 'Economy' size 3/3d., from all Chemists.

A Slight Alteration

In one place Marjorie Sandford, playing Lily Pepper, was supposed to make a reference to the Almighty. The name of Jack Hylton was substituted.
Evening Standard.

This is one of the 400 "Blimpisms" from

THIS ENGLAND

Selected by V. S. Pritchett and illustrated by LOW

On Sale Everywhere. One Shilling

Post free from the Publishers to any address, 1s. 2d. per copy.

NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, 10, Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1.

a cow getting up: between the gait of a horse and a camel? What British wild-flower has no green leaves? What British bird cannot walk or hop on the ground? What British birds pair for life?

2. What pastimes do you associate with: March Brown, Puster, Position-finder, Racing Plate, Full Bed, Telemark, Falling Leaf, Dedans, Bracket, Black Maria, Petering?

3. Which is the lightest element? In what liquid will solid iron float? What ignites the fuel in a Diesel engine? What is an amalgam? What are the special virtues of cod-liver oil? What is evidential information derived from blood-grouping tests in questions of disputed paternity?

4. Translate into American: window blind, curtain, return ticket, season-ticket holder, banknote, treasury bill, shop-assistant, commercial traveller, cotton-wool, braces, sock-suspenders, tram, a room on the first floor.

Translate into English: Diaper, shop-girl, public school, elevator, barbecue, tuxedo, cuspidor, realtor.

5. Which famous living statesmen were: a shoemaker's son, a baker's son, a blacksmith's son, the son of a thrice-married father, of a village schoolmaster? Which was himself a sisal grower?

What premier of what country was saved from execution by his American citizenship?

Who was the first woman elected an M.P.?

In what democratic European country (a) is the nominal head of the State also president of the Government, (b) are there only twelve citizens with incomes over £6,500 a year, (c) is there the oldest Parliament?

6. Place in ascending order of wavelength: ultra violet, c-sharp, Hamburg, an Atlantic roller, indigo, Lahti, a perm.

7. Name clockwise the countries bordering on:
(a) the German Reich in 1914, 1938 Sept. 1st, 1940 Jan. 1st.
(b) Russia in 1914, 1940 Jan. 1st.

8. Arrange these rivers in descending order of size: Sikiang, Seine, Po, Mississippi, Nile, Rhone, Severn, Vistula.

Group into relevant pairs: Santos, Coffee, Staten Island, Nigeria, Humming-birds, Aaland, Nougat Cape Coast Castle, the Grain Race, Montelimar.

9. Between what hours may you: get married, drink beer in a Rutland pub, use a workman's ticket, light a bonfire?

10. What author (i) suffered the maiming of his left hand "for the greater glory of the right"; (ii) was called "the lady" of his college; (iii) fell in love with and immortalised a girl of nine; (iv) began life as an apothecary's apprentice; (v) was declared by his enemies to have married his daughter; (vi) ceased to write at the age of 19; (vii) wrote an official account of the siege of Sebastopol?

11. Who was the composer of (a) La Fille du Regiment; (b) La Fille de Mme. Angot; (c) Genoveva; (d) Atys; (e) Masaniello; (f) Lulu; (g) Nabucodonosor; (h) The Merry Wives of Windsor; (i) Falstaff; (j) Sir John in Love; (k) The Jewels of the Madonna; (l) Benvenuto Cellini; (m) Edgar; (n) Mozart and Salieri; (o) The Grand Duchess of Gerolstein; (p) Camacho's Wedding; (q) Zelmira; (r) Les Deux Journées; (s) The Corregidor; (t) La Favorita.

12. Where (in peace-time) are the following pictures and buildings to be found?

(a) The Sistine Madonna; (b) The Gypsy Madonna; (c) The Madonna dell' Orto; (d) The Litta Madonna; (e) The Polish Rider; (f) The Zwinger; (g) The Giralda; (h) The Ali Kapi; (i) The Tempesta; (j) The Arena Chapel; (k) The Isenheim Altar; (l) The Blind Girl; (m) The Dome of the Rock; (n) The Schifanoia; (o) The Marino Casino; (p) The Superga; (q) Un dimanche à la Grande Jatte; (r) The House in the Wood; (s) The Death of Marat; (t) The Enseigne de Gersaintes; (u) The Surrender of Breda; (v) The Rake's Progress; (w) The Martyrdom of St. Symphorien; (x) The Monbijou Palace; (y) Malcontenta; (z) La Favorita.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, Feb. 2nd.

2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.

3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

WAR'S GRIM SHADOW COVERS THE WORLD TO-DAY

In stricken China, among Finnish and Polish refugees, in welfare work for evacuated children and in service of all kinds for the troops, The Salvation Army is bringing the radiance of the Cross.

We must maintain and extend our efforts.

Will you please help us to do this by sending a donation to

The
Salvation Army
101, QUEEN VICTORIA STREET, LONDON, E.C.4.
The Army that serves on every front

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 518

Set by D. Tearsheet

Competitors are asked to provide a set of six known quotations appropriate to the flyleaves of any of the books listed elsewhere in this issue under Last Year's Books.

Report by D. Tearsheet

I have been snowed up in a drift of quotations. Most were apt, but there were mysteries. When M. Kingston applies to Smart's *Rejoice in the Lamb* the words "old-fashioned poetry, but choicely good," I suspect that he or she has not read this singular and surrealistic poem. When G. W. Harris suggests for Mrs. Masterman's life of her husband *Also Sprach Zarathustra*, my wits cannot rise to the point. But most of the entries were anything but far-fetched. *Macbeth* and *King Lear* provide a variety of gloomy exclamations appropriate to *The Fate of Homo Sapiens*, *Fallen Bastions* and *France and Munich*—the best of these being Georg Breuer's "'Tis the times plague when madmen lead the blind." Here is a selection of the happier strokes:

The Blaze of Noon—
"But O as to embrace me she enclin'd
I wak'd, she fled, and day brought back my night."
(E. W. Fordham.)

Souvarine's *Stalin*
For I have sworn thee fair and thought thee bright
Who art as black as hell, as dark as night.
(J. W. F. Hurford).

France and Munich
What wouldst thou have a serpent strike thee twice.
(Norman Totty).

Dangerous Thoughts
"The muttering grew to a grumbling and the grumbling to a mighty rumbling." (*The Pied Piper*) (W. E. B.).

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QUIET room, furnished, kitchenette, in private flat, to let. 'Phone: TER. 5363, 2–4.

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REAL modern comfort, home-grown produce, wonderful Atlantic view, 2 acres, all go to make holidays at Rockingham, Westward Ho! Devon, ideal. 2½–4 *gns.* MISS FOLL (Northam 183).

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HAPPY home in safe area offered one or two girls as companion daughter 13. Terms moderate. Within reach excellent school. Ref. given and required. HINE, "Old Hall," Dorrington, Shropshire.

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THEN there is always KINGSTON.
Enquiries to The Secretary, Kingston, Edinburgh, 9.

Guide to Modern Wickedness

"I never wonder to see men wicked, but I often wonder to see them not ashamed" (Swift). (O. E. Allen).

Finnegan's Wake

"For words are wise men's counters; they do but reckon with them. But they are the money of fools" (Hobbes).
(K. M. Hamilton).

For *Union Now*, H. E. D. sends lines from Tennyson's *Mechanophilus*.

"Dash back that ocean with a pier,
Strew yonder mountain flat;
A railway there, a tunnel here,
Mix me this zone with that."

Alan Short for *Greek Memories* sends T. E. Brown's lines:

"O Blackbird, what a boy you are,
How you *do* go it! blowing your yellow bugle."

Alan R. Thomas for *Security, Can We Retrieve It?* quotes from *Pygmalion*: "Not bloody likely."

And for a novel by one of our most celebrated writers, P. A. M. libellously suggests: "Greasy Joan doth keel the pot."

Good lists were sent by T. Creyke-Clark and K. M. Hamilton. The first prize goes to J. C. B. Date, the second to F. D. Pool.

FIRST PRIZE

1. *Finnegan's Wake*, by James Joyce:
"They've a temper, some of them—particularly verbs, they're the proudest—adjectives you can do anything with, but not verbs—however, I can manage the whole lot"—Humpty Dumpty in *Through the Looking-Glass*.
2. *Flaubert and Madame Bovary*, by Francis Steegmuller:
"Vingt fois sur le métier remettez votre ouvrage,
Polissez-le sans cesse, et le repolissez."
Boileau, *Art Poétique*. Chant I
3. *Diplomacy*, by Harold Nicolson:
"Look like the innocent flower,
But be the serpent under't." *Macbeth*. Act I. Sc. 5.
4. *Stalin*, by Boris Souvarine:
"This tyrant, whose sole name blisters our tongues, was once thought honest." *Macbeth*. Act IV. Sc. 3.
5. *The Englishman's Food*, by J. C. Drummond and Anne Wilbraham:
"Rhubarb, oh for rhubarb."
Webster, *The Duchess of Malfi*. Act II. Sc. 5.
6. *French-English Dictionary*, ed. by J. E. Mansion:
"I do not know the French for fer and ferret and firk."
Henry V. Act IV. Sc. 4.

J. C. B. DATE

SECOND PRIZE

For the fly-leaf of G. F. Green's *Stendhal*:
"Love made him weep his pints like you and me." (Auden.)

For *Stalin*, by Boris Souvarine:
"Who would have thought the old man had so much blood in him?" or "Ye have robbed," said he, "ye have slaughtered and made an end." (Newbolt.)

For G. D. H. Cole's *Trade Unionism To-day*:
"You would not think it to look at him but Mr. Cole is bilious. Mr. Cole is *very* bilious." (Mr. Woodhouse in *Emma*.)

Joad's *Guide to Modern Wickedness*:
"Look in thy heart and write." (Sydney.)

Heppenstall's novel *The Blaze of Noon*:
"What hath night to do with sleep?" (Comus.)

Gedye's *Fallen Bastions*:
"The bright day is done
And we are for the dark." (*Antony and Cleopatra*.)

P. D. POOL

SEARCHLIGHT ON SOCIAL CREDIT

by
W. R. HISKETT and J. A. FRANKLIN, with an introduction by KINGSLEY MARTIN.

8s. 6d.

Spectator: "... It is, indeed, a book which only knowledge of the resources in evasion possessed by Social Crediters forbids one to hail as the last word on the subject."

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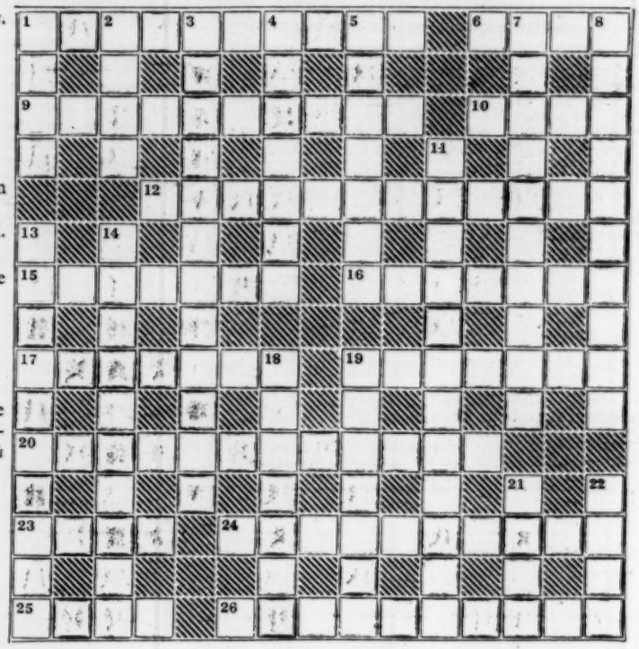
WEEK-END CROSSWORD 516

Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later that first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1.



Set by L.-S.

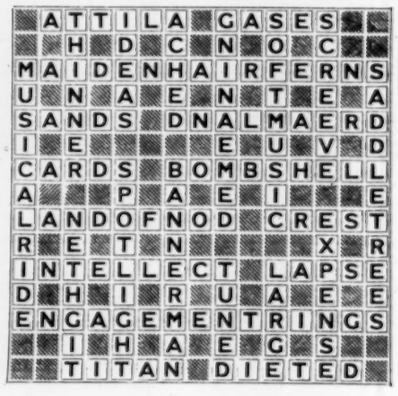
ACROSS——

1. Does it coach the B.B.C. Orchestra? (10)
6 (rev.) Is it keyed up to hold water? (4)
9. They can hardly ever be in the position of not having a leg to stand on. (10)
10 (rev.) Six-sided figure. (4)
12. They faithfully hope that their finds at journey's end will prove convertible. (12)
15. William III's staple diet? (7)
16. He first paces it out. (7)
17. Eva came back by the roundabout out of gear. (7)
19. It would be quite in keeping for him to be all at sea in his job. (7)
20. Affectionately heroic address to Miss Fields? (12)
23. Not racing saddle trees. (4)
24. Where you put under done food (10)
25. They become friends finally. (4)
26. Criminally opposed to the Crown. (10)

DOWN——

1. A section of 14. (4)
2. { North. / East. } (4)
3. Literally prepared sheets. (12)
4. Unreasonable conclusions. (7)
5. Not shut in. (7)
7. They might come about if the Baltic rose. (10)
8. Break a crust with me in the lane. It's lakely that this describes Finland. (10)
11. Gardening process necessary for the tenderfoot. (12)
13. One goal's so easily converted from this. (10)
14. Lady Godiva's horse was. (10)
18. The vine has to die off away. (7)
19. How Taffy failed to keep his book. (7)
21. You would probably not eat it at its feast. (4)
22. Is left out at the beginning. (4)

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD



The last week's winner is

G. S. Warren, 202 Clive Court, W.9

Company Meeting

MARTINS BANK

STRONG LIQUID POSITION.

TRADE DEVELOPMENT ESSENTIAL.

THE 109th Annual General Meeting of Martins Bank, Limited, was held at the Head Office, Liverpool, on Tuesday, January 23rd.

Mr. Frederic Alan Bates, the Chairman, who presided, said: The report and accounts show the continued progress of the Bank, and I trust you will share our satisfaction with them.

The accounts include the result of our trading during four months of war conditions, but the earlier eight months were not normal, because of the threat of war. The warnings of Germany's intentions had enabled us to make our plans, and when the shock came machinery which had been in readiness was put into motion and quickly had the effect of creating confidence. The conditions ensuing, however, have widely influenced trade; it is, therefore, gratifying to present accounts such as those before you. The future is obscure, but the Bank is in a strong position, ready to meet whatever trials may be ahead.

STRONG LIQUID POSITION

Our net profit is £876,025, an amount slightly in excess of last year. While there has been general expansion in our business, the year's profit has not risen correspondingly, owing to expenses entailed by the war and the incidence of taxation. There has also been a falling-off in profits from foreign business. A year ago we increased the dividend for the half-year from 7 to 7½ per cent. For the interim dividend in July we were able to repeat the 7½ per cent., and now feel justified in continuing it for December at the same rate, making 15 per cent. for the year.

In these days it is doubly necessary that we should maintain a liquid position. Our cash in hand and at the Bank of England is no less than £12,475,000, or 11.23 per cent. of our liabilities to the public. Money at call and short notice is £8,530,000, £2,430,000 more than last year. Total cash items, amounting to £24,727,000, are 22.26 per cent. of our public liabilities, while, with our Treasury bills (£6,255,000, or £2,990,000 in excess of the previous year's figure) and other bills discounted, the ratio is 28.71 per cent. The total of these very liquid items reaches £31,890,000. Further, when the very large amount, £14,398,000, of short-term investments is considered, our liquid position is shown to be very strong.

STEADY GROWTH OF FUNDS

Investments are £607,000 up on the year at £34,172,000, a figure considerably below market value. Bank premises and rentable properties, at £2,746,000, are a most valuable asset, and the source of very substantial income. Acceptances, endorsements, etc., at £7,724,000 have fallen off during the year by £473,000, the decrease being mainly due to disturbed international relations.

Deposits have risen to £110,420,000, an increase of £10,380,000. In due course we shall see a portion of these deposits withdrawn for subscription to war loans; nevertheless, if the last war is any criterion, deposits should continue on the upgrade.

Advances were £46,251,000, as compared with £44,421,000 a year ago. They have been appreciably higher during the twelve months under review, and at one time were over fifty million pounds.

TRADE DEVELOPMENT

Reports from our trading centres all express the difficulty of forecasting the future under war conditions, but they are unanimous in expecting that there will be great activity. But one day the world will be turning again to peace. Grave difficulties will face us then owing to the dislocation caused by war.

It is vital, therefore, that the trade of the country should be vigorously expanded, and in particular the export side, whereby we largely meet the cost of imports which supply both the sinews of war and our foodstuffs. I spoke last year of the exigency of developing our export trade. The necessity is greater to-day. The insistence of industrialists and trade associations in drawing attention to this most important question is not only serving the trader's point of view, but also the wider sphere of national interest, which urgently requires the adoption of a definite policy. We are now, more than ever, the world's best customer, and great efforts should be made to ensure that our trade is reciprocal to the fullest extent possible. We can only supply those markets abroad if our prices are competitive. With our experience of the harm wrought by the unprofitable contest between rising cost and rising pay, there should be ready acceptance of wartime regulations, rationing, taxation of increased earnings, and, not least, the determination to help to win the war by savings for subscription to Government loans. So far as the Bank is concerned, you will wish there should be, apart from the maintenance of strength and security, unstinted service to the needs of the country in any appropriate direction. (Applause.)

The report and accounts were adopted.

Even in Wartime
CHILDREN come FIRST

For 56 years the N.S.P.C.C. has striven for the welfare of children who suffer needlessly. Through its "Children's Men" and widespread centres the Society has sought to remove the hardships which threaten a child's happiness.

"The Children First" has ever been a national attitude in times of danger. This war must be no exception. For information of the present work of the

N·S·P·C·C

please write to Wm. J. Elliott, O.B.E., Director, National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. Gifts are greatly needed and will be welcomed by the Hon. Treasurer, Victory House, Leicester Square, London, W.C.2.

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Attack the cold-cause successfully and miserable effects cease. Vapex does it—safely, sensibly. A drop on your handkerchief . . . deep-breathe the powerful, pleasant antiseptic vapour . . . cold-germs in all parts of nose and throat are destroyed—your head cleared, stuffiness relieved, congestion broken up. Symptoms are soon gone entirely . . . along with the cause of the trouble!

From your Chemist, 2/- & 3/-.

V190 THOMAS KERFOOT & CO., LTD.

THIS VITAL SERVICE
MUST GO ON

The work of the Life-Boat Service must still go on. During the War more calls for help than ever before will be made upon it. Life-boatmen will carry on their brave task in greatly increased difficulty and danger.

In this great struggle in which we are all now engaged, your contribution is more than ever needed. Send in yours today.

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LIFE-BOAT INSTITUTION
LIFE-BOAT HOUSE, BOREHAM WOOD, HERTS.
The EARL OF HARROWBY, Hon. Treasurer,
Lt.-Col. C. R. SATTERTHWAITE, O.B.E., Secretary.

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By CYNICUS

SECOND THOUGHTS ON THE GILT-EDGED MARKET—THE RAILWAY BOOM—TIN SHARES

THE readjustment of yields in the gilt-edged market goes on apace. I mean that the long-dated stocks are moving up in line with the advance in the short-dated which the Treasury is boldly trying to engineer through its issue of five-year Conversion 2 per cent. bonds at par. Among the "shorts" the most spectacular jump was Conversion 2½ per cent. bonds 1944–49 from 96⅞ to 100. Among the "longs" War Loan moved nearly 2 points to 98⅞ and 3 per cent. Local Loans to 86¼. The advance in War Loan will probably slow down as it nears par for there is a big speculative position open in this stock and a lot of profit-taking to come. 3 per cent. Local Loans is now the best purchase for those who believe that the Treasury will be aiming at a 3 per cent. to 3¼ percent. long-term rate of interest. Realising that the only limit to the market rise under present conditions of Treasury control is the psychological one of "nerves," Lord Stamp, chairman of the Government's Economic Policy Committee, assumed the House of Lords on Tuesday that there was no sign of "the vicious spiral or general inflation." Prices should not be reduced, he said, below essential replacement costs. An adequate price gave the double guarantee of continuity of supplies and curtailment of consumption. For exporters the rise in prices and costs was offset by the depreciation in sterling. In other words the Government's economic adviser is in favour of a *controlled* inflation. That is the sugar-pill for the gilt-edged market. The policy of controlled inflation implies, of course, either some effective control of the rise in wages or more effective control of the rise in prices through drastic, and perhaps universal, rationing. It remains to be seen whether this Government can induce labour to play its game.

* * *

The second half of my New Year's speculative straddle is at last coming into its own. The railway market is rising almost a point a day. The dog-fight between the Treasury and the railway chairmen over the terms of war-time "compensation" is still going on, but rumour has it that the Treasury has yielded some ground. One City Editor declares that the basis of compensation will be the average net revenues of the years 1935 to 1937 with a share to the railway stockholders in any surplus earnings of the war period. Another asserts that the average net revenues of 1935–37 will be the basic minimum and that this basis will provide a minimum 3 per cent. on Great Western ordinary, 1 per cent. on L.M.S. ordinary, 1 per cent. on L. and N.E. second preference and ¾ per cent. on Southern deferred ordinary stock. All this would be very stimulating to the market. It may be a useful guide to set out the actual earnings on these junior stocks in 1937 and the high prices touched by these stocks in 1938 :—

	Div. in 1937 %	High Price 1938	Present Price	Rise to 1938 highs %
L.M. & S. 4% (1923) pref. .	4	70½	47	49.5
„ Ordinary ..	1½	30½	15	100.8
L. & N.E. 4% 2nd gteed. ..	4	91½	70½	29.4
„ 4% 1st pref. ..	4	68½	43	58.7
„ 4% 2nd pref. ..	1⅞	27½	15	80.8
Great Western ordinary ..	4	67½	40	68.0
Southern 5% pref. ord. ..	5	87	70	24.3
„ def. ord.	1½	21¾	14½	52.6

It will be seen that for the speculator L.M.S. ordinary has the most attractive and for the investor L.M.S. (1923) preference.

* * *

Some readers of this page may have purchased tin shares on my recommendation in December and have been distressed by the present reaction in the market. I would like to reassure them and to ask them to blame the American consumer, not me. Since the Government cancelled its maximum price of £230 on December 11th, the price of tin has risen from £230 to £275 per ton and has fallen to £231¾ per ton. Such is the effect of American speculation or panic. The consumers' rush to stock up has been followed, as was to be expected, by a period of subnormal buying. The American speculator is a nuisance, but he has to be considered and unless the International Tin Committee had revised the quota for the first quarter of 1940 up to 120 per cent. of standard, this American panicky demand might have pushed the price of tin over £300 per ton. As it happens, the International Tin Committee has beaten the American speculator in record time. The rapid stepping-up of the quota with retrospective effect has enabled the smelters to complete all unfilled buying orders. The current supplies from the mines are now plentiful and the consumer has nothing to panic about. In fact, with a quota of 120 per cent. current supplies are well above the level of current demand. Total world consumption cannot be in excess of 200,000 tons per annum, which, allowing for the fact that Bolivia and the non-restricting countries are unable to produce to full capacity, can be taken care of by 100 per cent. quota. The International Tin Committee would, therefore, be well advised to reduce the quota to 90 per cent., and this I expect to happen—with perhaps retrospective effect—at any moment. The game that is being played by the American consumer does not, however, affect the investment merits of tin shares. The tin mining companies can pay dividends between the 1936-37 levels with a quota averaging between 90 per cent. and 100 per cent. and a price of around £230 per ton. It is possible that before the present quota of 120 per cent. is reduced, the price of tin will fall below £230 per ton, but as the Buffer Pool has cash and no tin, it will begin to buy if the price does fall much below that figure. At the present market prices tin shares appear cheap. Prices to-day are lower than on December 11th, when the price of tin was decontrolled, and in many cases lower than on December 1st, when the quota was increased to 100 per cent. For example :

	Prices 30.11.39	8.12.39	Present	Mean of 1936/37 Divs. %	Potential Div. Yield £ s. d.
Amalgamated Tin of Nigeria 5/- shs. ..	8/9	9/3	8/9	15	8 11 6
London Tin 4/- shs...	5/-	5/3	4/3	7*	6 11 9
Malayan Tin 5/- shs...	38/9	38/9	36/9	86½	11 14 9
Southern Kinta 5/- shs.	16/-	16/3	15/-	25	8 6 9
Southern Malayan 5/- shs.	26/3	27/6	24/3	51½	10 10 9
Tronoh 5/- shs. ..	23/9	25/-	24/9	50	10 2 0

* 1937 dividend only.

If tin shares are regarded as speculative investments offering some hedge against an inflation and in the meantime a relatively high return, I see no reason why they should not be included in the commodity section of any investment list.

MARTINS BANK
LIMITED

Chairman: FREDERIC A. BATES, M.C., A.F.C., D.L.
Deputy Chairmen: Rt. Hon. LORD COLWYN, P.C., D.L., LL.D.
SIR R. D. HOLT, BART, LL.D. G. E. B. BROMLEY-MARTIN
Director and General Manager: J. M. FURNISS

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS, 31st December, 1939

LIABILITIES

Capital paid up	£4,160,042
Reserve Fund	3,600,000
Current, Deposit and other accounts (including Profit and Loss Account)	111,081,442
Liability for Acceptances, Endorsements, etc.	7,724,632
	£126,566,116

ASSETS

Cash in hand and at Bank of England	£12,475,357
Balances with, and cheques in course of collection on other British Banks	3,555,542
Money at call and short notice	8,530,000
Balances with Banks abroad	166,056
Treasury Bills	6,255,000
Bills of Exchange	908,931
Investments	24,171,928
Advances to Customers and other accounts	50,031,844
Bank Premises	2,746,826
Liability of Customers for Acceptances, Endorsements, etc.	7,724,632
	£126,566,116

LONDON DISTRICT HEAD OFFICE: 68 LOMBARD STREET, E.C.3
HEAD OFFICE: WATER STREET, LIVERPOOL, 2
600 BRANCHES

Company Meeting

BARCLAYS BANK LIMITED

MR. EDWIN FISHER'S ADDRESS

THE 45th Ordinary General Meeting of Barclays Bank Limited was held on Wednesday at the Head Office in London. Mr. Edwin Fisher (Chairman) presided, and at the outset referred to the sad loss sustained through the deaths of Mr. Robert L. Barclay and Mr. Ernest R. Dodsworth, both members of the Board. He then described in some detail the wartime arrangements the Bank had made regarding staff, A.R.P., etc., and stated that already over 2,000 men had been released to join the fighting and civil defence forces. The Bank had granted them full salary for one month and thereafter their Bank salary, less service pay, allowing them to retain the benefit of all service allowances. He paid a special tribute to the loyal way the existing staff were carrying out their duties in trying times.

After referring to the amalgamation of the Union Bank of Manchester with Barclays Bank the Chairman continued (in part):

The total of our Current, Deposit and Other Accounts on 31st December last amounted to £461,376,448, a record figure, and showed an increase of £28,295,263 compared with the end of 1938.

Our holding of Cash in Hand and with the Bank of England had risen at the end of last year to £58,177,086, compared with £53,241,449 twelve months earlier. The item of Balances with other British Banks and Cheques in Course of Collection, at £19,161,492, showed an expansion of £4,288,372 during the year. This increase reflects the longer period which is now taken to clear cheques, owing to the removal —as a War measure—of a large part of the organisation of the London Bankers' Clearing House to a provincial centre. The total of our Money at Call and Short Notice on 31st December last stood at £28,713,245, an increase of £2,505,695 compared with the end of 1938.

The chief movement in the assets of the Bank has been in Bills Discounted, which have risen from £54,594,153 to £67,585,175, of which £47,975,000 is represented by Treasury Bills.

The chairman then dealt at length with Treasury Bills and the Money Market and, continuing, said:

INVESTMENTS AND ADVANCES

The total of our Investments, excluding our holdings in Subsidiary Banks, amounted at the end of December last to £98,840,829, compared with £96,876,802 at the close of 1938. Of these Investments, £90,564,858 are in Securities of, or guaranteed by, the British Government. There has been a slight increase in our Advances to £200,847,108, against £199,452,980 twelve months ago. Applications for advances are always given the most careful consideration—that is clearly our duty—but, in times like the present, a special duty is imposed upon us to see that, consistent with prudent banking practice and having regard at all times to the legitimate interests of our Customers, the credit resources of the country are primarily directed towards financing those activities which would most assist the National endeavour.

NET PROFIT

The Net Profit for the year ended 31st December last, after payment of all charges and after making provision for all Bad and Doubtful Debts and for Contingencies, amounted to the sum of £1,784,880 4s. 5d. To this sum has to be added £527,719 19s. 11d. brought forward from the previous year, making a total to be dealt with of £2,312,600 4s. 4d. The Directors have appropriated £200,000 to Contingency Account and £150,000 to Reduction of Premises Account, and Interim Dividends at the rate of 5 per cent. on the "A" Shares and 7 per cent. on the "B" and "C" Shares, less Income Tax at 5s. 6d. in the £ in each case, were paid on 1st August last, costing £755,064 7s. 0d. The Directors recommend Final Dividends of 5 per cent., making 10 per cent. for the year, on the "A" Shares and of 7 per cent., making 14 per cent. for the year, on the "B" and "C" Shares, less Income Tax at 7s. in the £ in each case, involving a sum of £676,954 5s. 0d., and leaving a balance of £530,581 12s. 4d. to be carried forward. Some reduction of profit was not unexpected, particularly bearing in mind the higher rate of Income Tax imposed in the War Budget and the special expenditure which we had to face in many directions as a result of the War and to which reference has already been made. I hope that Shareholders will agree with us that, in all the circumstances, the results shown are satisfactory.

SPENDING AND SAVING

We all know that increasing War requirements will leave less of current production available for the needs of the civil population. If, however, the contraction in the supply of goods is not accompanied by a reduction in the demands of individuals, we are bound to suffer the evils of rising costs and prices. It is Utopian to hope that in wartime there will be no rise in prices, that wages will remain stable and that profits will also keep in step. The knowledge that such changes have already occurred lends added emphasis to the need to prevent, as far as possible, dislocation of the economic structure and what has been described as the vicious spiral in which now prices, now wages seek for the ascendency. Rationing alone would not provide the solution, for although valuable as a means of securing equitable distribution of limited supplies, it would tend to divert demand to unrationed articles. To some extent, the adjustment will be accomplished by the higher taxation which the country is now bearing and which will result in the transfer to the State of an increased share of the purchasing power of the individual citizen, but taxation, even at its existing high level, will not furnish a complete solution. The individual is therefore being urged to save, and to the extent that he saves Government expenditure will be facilitated and the competitive bidding up of prices will be avoided. In return for his effort and the sacrifice which he is called upon to make, the individual is entitled to expect that the Government is getting good value for money wisely spent.

In the House of Commons the Chancellor pointed out that our spending on War and other services was at the rate of £2,400 million per annum—an astronomical figure. As the War develops, it may well be more. Approximately only one-half of the cost is being obtained from revenue, although the standard rate of income tax has been increased to 7s. 0d. in the £ for the current financial year and will be raised to 7s. 6d. in the £ in 1940-41, apart from higher taxation in other directions. These taxes, imposed on and accepted by the public, indicate not only the resources which are being mobilised to prosecute the War, but also the will and purpose of the Nation to carry on the task.

THE IMPORTANCE OF EXPORTS

Not the least of the problems facing the Government in financing the War is the provision of foreign exchange with which to purchase supplies from abroad and the solution of this problem will play a part, the importance of which cannot be exaggerated. Even in peacetime, the United Kingdom has to import a very large part of its requirements, while, in war conditions, the importance of overseas supplies will tend to increase rather than to diminish. Our ability to keep open the trade routes to this country is a vital element in our economic strength and in the united effort of the Allied Powers.

The external resources of the United Kingdom are large and steps have been taken to mobilise them. We shall, however, be well advised to guard jealously these overseas assets, for they cannot easily be replaced.

The searchlight of attention has rightly been focused with more than usual intensity on the importance of our export trade and we are in no doubt as to the vital part which this arm plays when Britain is at War—a part which ranks among the foremost when we come to appraise and pass under review the strength of our National armoury. It is one thing to define an objective and another to devise the means to attain it. Control of both imports and exports is essential in wartime, in order that we may be able to use our external purchasing power to the best advantage and to ensure that the needs of the fighting forces are fully met. Although under a system of control a certain amount of freedom must be surrendered by the trading community, control at its best should be so ordered as to cause a minimum of inconvenience and disturbance—control operated by persons who have understanding and who will not stifle trade by the imposition of dispensable formalities. Trade should be allowed to expand and develop, so far as may be, in a normal, healthy and unrestricted fashion, subject only to that degree of control which the emergency of the times properly imposes. We should endeavour to deny to ourselves the importation of any goods that can rightly be described as non-essential, in favour of those many requirements which are vital to our needs and which come to us from overseas. Such a course would not only free the foreign exchange needed to finance the latter, but would also liberate valuable cargo space in which the essential goods would be carried to our shores. While it is true that certain material which we need in wartime must be obtained from overseas, it may even be prudent that other purchases should be made abroad, although the goods could be produced at home, for by this means a saving of our own man power is accomplished. The goods so purchased could be paid for by sales of goods manufactured in this country and not required for war purposes. To secure by our export trade a return flow of the goods we need or the exchange to buy them from other countries is a cardinal factor that is as important as it is self-evident.

Economic strength will play such an impressive part in War that no opportunities must be lost in the solution of the problem of how to sell more and more goods abroad. The Government, the individual citizen and the manufacturer all have their separate tasks to perform. The question of supplies will be the responsibility of the Government, who will decide the priorities to be observed, and the individual will assist by limiting his consumption. The manufacturer, despite control and despite the difficulties of selling abroad under war conditions, retaining his initiative, will seek to gain a sure foothold in every available market. Essential as that is to-day, it will be of transcendent value in the days that lie ahead, when, the War over, we are called upon to face and deal with the many problems that must assuredly arise.

The report was unanimously adopted.